WORLD / A20

A million Mexicans hold protest; demand recount

BUSINESS / B1

Pledges for RP infra projects start pouring in

NEWS / A7

Tropical depression 'Henry' expected to hit N. Luzon today

BPI 155

SEE PANORAMIC SECTION-E

Filipino math trainer chosen Erdos Awardee

By Nikko Dizon

HE TRAINS BOYS GOOD AT NUMBERS TO BECOME even better.

Because of Dr. Simon Chua's efforts, many young Filipino students gifted in Math have won international competitions, the latest of which was on July 16 at the "Primary Math World Contest" in Hong Kong.

FILIPINO A13

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Tuesday, August 1, 2006 ** Vol. 21 / No. 214
website: www.inq7.net

With a guitar, she kept her sanity amid blasts

By Nikko Dizon and Leonecio Bañez Jr.
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

THE DEAFENING EXPLOSIONS OF BOMBS dropping in Lebanon shook buildings, destroyed lives and spelled an uncertain future for thousands of Filipino workers.

But Flerida Pablo hung on to her guitar—and

NATION A10

Israel halts air strikes amid outrage

JERUSALEM—WORLD OUTRAGE OVER the killing of nearly 60 civilians during an Israeli aerial bombing of the Lebanese village of Qana on Sunday prompted Israel to call a 48-hour halt to its deadly air strikes.

But hopes for a longer ceasefire quickly dimmed after the Israeli defense minister vowed "to expand and strengthen" its offensive on the Hezbollah militia in Lebanon and the guerrillas stepped up their attacks on Israel.

After the suspension of air strikes began at 2 a.m. Monday, Hezbollah guerrillas in Lebanon fired rockets at the northern Israeli town of Kiryat Shemona, Israel Radio said. No casualties were reported.

Hezbollah guerrillas also attacked an Israeli tank in southern Lebanon on Monday, wounding three soldiers. In response, Israeli warplanes fired into open areas near the village of Tayibeh to protect its ground forces, the military said.

Despite the suspension of air strikes, Israel said its Air Force would attack guerrillas that posed an immediate threat to Israeli troops or civilians.

Israeli artillery attacks, which are likewise not covered by the halt in air strikes, also continued to wreak havoc in southern Lebanon. A Lebanese soldier outside the southern port of Tyre was killed, a security official said.

Thousands of civilians trapped in southern Lebanon's war zone for three weeks, however, took advantage of Israel's pause in air strikes and made an exodus to the north.

With the fear of aerial bombardment eased, Lebanese Red Cross teams escorted by UN observers also went to the Lebanese village of Srifa to dig up more than 50 bodies believed still buried under rubble since Israeli strikes wiped out an entire neighborhood on July 19. The bodies had begun decomposing, the Red Cross said.

Before ending her diplomatic mission to the Middle East with her departure

ISRAEL A2

A SHATTERED kitchen is all that's left of a house in the bombed Lebanese village of Qana.

3 assassinations in a day

2 militant leaders, lensman shot dead

By Desiree Caluza and Villamor Visaya Jr.
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau
Bobby Q. Labalan
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau
and Nancy Carvajal

STRIKING WITH IMPUNITY, assassins yesterday gunned down a political activist riding in the family SUV, a student militant aboard a passenger bus and a news photographer on his way to work.

At least three other people were wounded in the "Bloody Monday" attacks which occurred a week after President Macapagal-Arroyo, in her State of the Nation Address, condemned political killings and urged witnesses to come forward.

Killed were Bayan Muna coordinator Abet Ocampo-Claver, who was shot dead in Kidapawan; League of Filipino Students provincial spokesperson Hui Mon Tuvera, who was slain in Sorsogon, and Tempo tabloid photographer Prudencio "Dick" Melendres, who was gunned down in Malabon.

All the assassins escaped.

Yesterday's killings brought to five the number of militants killed in the week that has passed since Mr Arroyo's State, militant groups said.

The latest killings also brought to 244 the number of political militants murdered since Mr Arroyo took office in

3 ASSASSINATIONS A4

AN ACTIVIST scrawls a slogan on the gate of the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency (Nica) in Quezon City denouncing the killing of a student leader in Sorsogon. MARTI JUDA

KEEPING DAD'S MEMORY ALIVE. A son of news photographer Prudencio Melendres holds on to the memory of his murdered father. MARK JAVIER

Palace officials snub probe of Owwa funds

By TJ Burgonio

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY EDUARDO Ermita and other top officials yesterday snubbed a Senate inquiry into the government's "grave-need" repatriation of Filipino workers trapped in Lebanon, fueling speculation they were covering up a shortage of evacuation funds held by the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (Owwa).

Al Francis Bichara, the country's ambassador to Lebanon, testified by phone patch on the pressing need for the embassy to have a stand-by fund to evacuate at least half of the estimated 40,000 workers before the borders are closed. Further estimates put the number of Filipinos at 50,000.

In his heartsong testimony, Bichara repeated his earlier statements that he had not received any funds from Manila even after Ambassador Prey Cimatu and Undersecretary Rafael Seguis reduced his earlier request for $1.1 million for 10,000 workers to $465,000 for 5,000 workers.

"It is strongly advisable for all Filipinos to leave Lebanese," Bichara told the investigating labor committee chaired by Sen. Aquilino Pimentel. "It's going to be difficult if we are trapped here."

Following a resolution filed by Sen. Richard Gordon, Pimentel called the inquiry because of the perception that the government's calibrated contingency plan in evacuating the workers out of Lebanon "was grossly inadequate."

"While other countries were pouring in resources, the country

PALACE A11

₱500M sought for OFWs

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Philip C. Tubeza

WITH THE FUND JAGE CONTROversy simmering to a boil, Malacañang has loosened its purse strings to pour in up to ₱1 billion and unveiled a plan to evacuate all the more than 30,000 Filipinos before the bombing resumes in Lebanon.

Rep. Joey Salceda told President Macapagal-Arroyo was seeking urgent congressional approval of a supplemental emergency budget of ₱500 million for the Lebanon evacuation. It will be added to the proposed ₱46.4 billion supplemental budget the Albay representative and a key presidential adviser filed yesterday. (See story on Page A16.)

"Every single inhabit that a single Filipino stays there, our national interest is put at risk," said Salceda of the current effort to carry out a voluntary repatriation mission that has sent home around 1,300 overseas Filipino workers. (See story above.)

"We cannot afford to have another Angelo de la Cruz," Salceda said. He was referring to the Filipino truck driver who was kidnapped in Iraq in 2004 and was

PAGBIRA A15

Honorable Gentleman Garcillano?

By TJ Burgonio

THE MAN WHO HAD PACED a congressional inquiry but dodged prosecution for engineering the alleged fraudulent victory of President Macapagal-Arroyo in the 2004 elections is reportedly eyeing a seat in the House of Representatives next year.

Who knows, Virgilio Garcillano could parlay the bad press he had gotten over the eponymous "Hello Garci" tape scandal—the result counts in the Arroyo administration last year—into an electoral victory.

"My information is that

HONORABLE A7

Inquirer founding chair wins RM Award

APOSTOL

EUGENIA DURAN-APOSTOL, founding chair of the Philippine Daily Inquirer, yesterday won the Ramon Magsaysay Award, Asia's version of the Nobel Prize, for "her courageous example in placing the truth-telling press at the center of the struggle for democratic rights and better governance in the Philippines."

Filipino businessman Antonio Meloto and the charity he leads called the Gawad Kalinga Community Development Foundation were also among this year's seven recipients of the annual awards, named after the late Philippine President Ramon Magsaysay.

Other winners of the prestigious prize were Cambodia's Dr. Somadoa Chea for government service; South Korea's Park Wan-soon for public service; Nepal's Sandesh Rati for promoting peace and international understanding; and India's Arvind Kejriwal for emergent leadership.

Apostol, 80, was honored with the Ramon Magsaysay Award for journalism, literature and creative communication arts. For 20 years, she was an editor of the women's pages of the Manila Times and the Manila Chronicle until the dictator Ferdinand Marcos closed the independent newspapers when he imposed martial law in 1972.

She subsequently found a niche at Veritas's Home Companion and later launched a new magazine with the help name Mr and Ms After the assassination of opposition leader Benigno Aquino Jr. in 1983, however, several editors of Mr and Ms began reporting weekly on Marcos' abuses and the rising opposition to him.

When Marcos called for a snap

INQUIRER A7

WEATHER FORECAST

Second FRONTPAGE

Esperon says Lim men ready to fight

By Doris J. Pacalioga

CAMP NARAI, LUCENA CITY—Contrary to his claim that he was only going to lead his men on a peaceful march to Edsa on Feb. 24, ex-Scout Ranger commander Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim was ready to resort to violence to oust President Macapagal-Arroyo.

This was revealed by Armed Forces of the Philippines Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr., who said yesterday that on the eve of the planned march, Lim warned then AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Generoso Senga and other senior officers he was ready for their guns should pro-government forces try to stop them.

"I remember a question that I posed to him [Lim], 'What will you do if soldiers will [stop] you? He said, 'We will fight back,'" said Esperon, who was Army commanding general at the time.

Esperon, Senga, then chief Vice Admiral Mateo Mengote, Air Force chief Lt. Gen. Jose Reyes and Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence Maj. Gen. Rodrigo Maclang, spoke one hour, not with Lim, on Monday, May. Gen. Senga reminded Col. Ariel Querubin and former Philippine National Police Special Action Force commander Chief Supt. Maximino Ivanos, on the other, just before midnight on Feb. 23 at Camp Aguinaldo.

They were ready

"Right from the start, rather they planned to bring their firearms with them. They were ready for violence. They were ready to act with violence. So what is he saying that they never against violence?" Esperon said.

Esperon disclosed details of the fateful meeting after he presided over the change of leadership in the Southern Luzon Command (Solcom) from Lt. Gen. Pedro Cabuay Jr., who retired, to Maj. Gen. Alexander Yano, former head of the 2nd Infantry Division based in Tarang, Batal.

He said Lim ordered Senga to come there to avoid a violent confrontation between rebel and pro-government soldiers.

"I sensed then Gen. Senga was quite stressed by the movement of Gen. Lim. Here could you do that to the [chief of staff], ask him to join you in the streets and march against the government," Esperon said.

Crossing the line

"Gen. Senga was clear about his march.

LIM: Peaceful march

ESPERON: They were ready for violence

He said, "You do not do that, you stop your plan otherwise you cross the line," Esperon said.

Lim, Miranda, Querubin and 11 other Scout Rangers and Marine officers are undergoing a pre-trial investigation preparatory to a court-martial for attempting to oust a martial.

They also face summary dismissal proceedings before the Efficiency and Separation Board along with 123 enlisted personnel from the First Scout Ranger Regiment.

During the initial investigation last Friday, Lim's lawyer, Vicente Ventadorn, said his client went to Senga to ask him to "put an end" to the plan of some lawmen to oust and install members of the "transition council" that would have taken over the government.

Asked if fugitive ex-senator Gregorio Honasan was one the list, Esperon replied: "He was misleading our troops into such activities. I don't think there's a need for such a question."

In his speech at the turnover ceremonies, Esperon thanked the Solcom forces for helping suppress the attempted coup d'etat on Feb. 24.

He said that while Senga and the service commanders were planning their counteroffensive in the Camp Aguinaldo-Fort Bonifacio, they hoped no reinforcements for the rebels would be coming from provinces in the Northern Luzon area.

"But only did you prevent forces from coming to Manila, but you apprehended those even when they were already going back to their units," Esperon told the soldiers. "Thank you because, you saved the day for us."

A question of face

Esperon said Lim asked to be placed under Senga's custody at around 1:30 a.m. on Feb. 24 after his plans fell through.

"He was put under the custody of Gen. Senga. He asked to be taken into custody as he will not lose face. He was so careful about saving face," he said.

Esperon, who took over from Senga as chief of staff on July 21, said he would now release the names of those Lim claimed would have been members of the "transition council" that would have taken over the government.

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'Rolex' mad at bank over Rolexes

By Philip C. Tubeza

BIR ROLEX: Suplico

BANK OF MAKATI SUPLICO yesterday said he was planning to sue the Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corp. after a move in Tokyo, Japan, refused to honor his HSBC credit card as he tried to buy two Rolex watches.

Suplico said he was "acutely humiliated" when a store clerk practically told him the HSBC credit card he handed over was stolen.

He said he was "inherently embarrassed" because there were many people in the store, including two other Filipino customers—Representative Jose Antonio Espino and Bello Rep. Robert Ace Barbers who were also trying to buy watches at duty-free stores.

'Stolen card'

"After you card was swiped, the salesgirl told me that the card but you're not the person using your card," Barbers said. "[She] told me that the card was broken but she cannot. I was using a stolen card," Suplico said.

Suplico said he had been an HSBC client "in good standing" for four years.

"I was shanghaied in Tokyo by the Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation. I was humiliated being told I was using a stolen card," he said.

"If the store called up police, I have to answer them, they would have been within their rights because HSBC reported that my card was stolen. They were in a position to have me arrested," he said.

It would have been a diplomatic embarrassment for the Philippines, too, he said.

Suplico said he was in Japan on his official visit together with Senators Panfilo Lacson and Rodolfo Biazon and several other congressmen, including Espino and Barbers.

'Official business'

"I was on official business, being vice president of the Philippine-Japan Parliamentarian Association. He visited the Japan Bank for International Cooperation, the Japan International Cooperation Agency, the Senate of the House and the Presidium of Holy House of Councilors [the Japanese Senate]," Suplico said.

He said they arrived in Tokyo on July 11 and stayed in the Imperial Hotel beside the Imperial Palace.

Rolex sale

While shopping on the afternoon of July 12 in the upscale Ginza district, Suplico said he, Biazon and Espino noticed there were a sale of Rolex watches in one of the stores.

When they saw that the watches were discounted up to 30 percent, they decided to buy some.

"My daughter Jessica grabs and subscribes from clients who want to buy watches. I want other to save one. I also wanted to give another to my son, who is also named Rolex," Suplico said.

"The list price of one it sells at [$]7,000 and the discounted price is [$]5,000. I also wanted to buy one for my son," he said.

To the rescue

Barbers, however, came to Suplico's rescue by letting him use his credit card to buy two Rolex watches worth a total of P299,000.

Biazon also immediately called up HSBC in Manila and paid for the two Rolex watches.

Also, with a Congressman Suplico flat in Tokyo right now I'm buying watches. Why did you say that I'm not the person using my own card, that it's a stolen card," Suplico recalled his conversation with an HSBC clerk.

Suplico said the clerk told him that "someone had tried to swipe" his card a few "moments ago."

"I said that was me. I was using my own card," he said.

Suplico then explained what happened to the store managers.

"He was very apologetic and bowed and bowed while he was exited us out of the store," he said.

Back in Manila, Suplico said he called up HSBC and was told by a bank representative that it was the Japanese store's fault.

'Insulted'

"I said that whatever strange, most they had with the store, I was insulted by the [statement] HSBC and the store," he said.

Suplico said he got more insulted when he realized he was talking to an assistant manager of a call center handling HSBC's customer service.

"A bank vice president or higher officer should have talked to me," he said.

The HSBC officer in Manila and yesterday it seemed to the bigger clientele with Suplico as getting his respect to.

Efforts to obtain comment from HSBC vice president for public affairs Tessa Bautista-Carreon said the bank was "aware of the issue first" with Suplico.

"We look forward to speaking with the cardholder soon to further explore the facts surrounding the unfortunate incident," Carreon said in the e-mailed statement. With Dino L. Lopez

BIR to run after accountants

By Cynthia D. Rubios

THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE will implement an expanded "Run After Tax Evaders" (e-Run) campaign aimed at catching accountants who help individuals and corporations avoid paying the correct taxes due to the government.

BIR Deputy Commissioner for Legal Zenaida Catanduc said the arrests of the first groups, which has engaged prominent businessmen and other big personalities, encouraged the bureau to expand it and go after those who help taxpayers dodge taxes.

"It is time with a team—targeting malpracticing accountants who are instrumental in perpetrating tax evasion schemes for their clients," Catanduc said.

He said that under the program, the accountants would be made to answer to the truth of the tax returns of their clients.

Catanduc, who recommended a raise, said most individuals and corporations isn't entirely to blame for commission keep their books and file their tax returns.

At present, it is mandatory for accountants to sign the tax returns with their clients. But, Catanduc pointed out, most taxpayers are "[a] specific" when it comes to signing the returns.

Under e-Run, the tax forms will be revised to require itemized accountants of those earning more than P500,000 in taxes to verify and attest to the truthfulness and correctness of the returns.

The revenue agency will set up an accreditation system for the accountants who will be assigned a BIR number which they will use in all their transactions with the bureau.

Catanduc said he is concerned will be allowed to practice unless the BIR system without an accreditation number.

"They will be strictly monitored in their audit cases and their cases. After, said they will be strictly monitored by the bureau against any accountant may lead to the suspension or revocation of their accreditation with the bureau, without which they cannot do business with us. Charges may also be filed against them with the Professional Regulation Commission," Catanduc said.

He said the BIR had already started talks with the Philippine Institute of Certified Public Accountants, the Tax Management Association of the Philippines, the PBC, as well as BIR consultants and department heads to get their support.

"This is the BIR's contribution to President Arroyo's call not vote against corruption. So far, we have received very encouraging feedback from these groups and from the BIR leaders, too," he said.

Catanduc said Revenue Commissioner Jose Mario Buting was determined to get the bureau, which is embarrassing in recent numerous today, out of the list of most corrupt government agencies.

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Vision of the Seas	$1,201.00	$3,001.00

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	Inside Cabin	Ocean View
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Vision of the Seas	$ 399.00	$1,299.00
Radiance of the Seas	$ 949.00	$1,499.00

CANADA / NEW ENGLAND

	Inside Cabin	Ocean View
Legend of the Seas	$ 999.00	$2,099.00
Vision of the Seas	$1,149.00	$2,249.00

PANAMA CANAL

	Inside Cabin	Ocean View
Infinity (Celebrity Cruises)	$1,399.00	$3,000.00
Millennium of the Seas	$1,399.00	$2,999.00
Balcony	$2,719.00	$3,719.00

	Inside Cabin	Ocean View
Millennium of the Seas	$1,199.00	$2,299.00
Vision of the Seas	$1,299.00	$2,399.00
Balcony	$1,599.00	$2,699.00

EUROPE

	Inside Cabin	Ocean View
Millennium of the Seas	$ 944.00	$1,899.00
Ocean View	$1,344.00	$2,194.00
Balcony Cabin	$1,344.00	$2,294.00
Galaxy (Celebrity Cruises)	$1,489.00	$2,439.00
Ocean View	$1,639.00	$2,589.00
Century (Celebrity Cruises)	$1,999.00	$2,819.00
Balcony Cabin	$2,299.00	$3,159.00

MEXICAN RIVIERA

	Inside Cabin	Ocean View
Mercury (Celebrity Cruises)	$ 699.00	$1,829.00
Vision of the Seas	$1,019.00	$2,019.00

EASTERN / WESTERN CARIBBEAN

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Navigator of the Seas	$ 699.00	$1,999.00
Mariner of the Seas	$ 499.00	$1,399.00
Ocean View	$ 699.00	$1,759.00
Balcony Cabin	$ 997.00	$2,097.00
Navigator of the Seas	$ 499.00	$1,599.00
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Balcony Cabin	$ 997.00	$2,097.00

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'Tis easy to find fault, Palace reminds bishop

MALACAÑANG IS URGING BISHOP Antonio Tobias and other critics to be more patient and cooperative in helping President Macapagal-Arroyo implement her development goals and boost economic growth.

"Our development agenda needs time, cooperation and focus to achieve its end goals. It would be better for our detractors to get on board rather than pull the ship down and drown the ardent hopes of our people," said Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye in a briefing.

The Palace was reacting to the fiercest human story yesterday when Tobias criticized President Arroyo for painting a rosy economic picture of the country in her State of the Nation Address last week.

In a press statement, Malacañang pointed out that Tobias had admitted to harboring "scrambled military sentiments."

The bishop had admitted that he gave sanctuary to Lt. Lawrence San Juan and six other rebel soldiers shortly after they escaped from detention in Fort Bonifacio early this year.

"It is unwise for some to engage in [illegible] and overlooking but what is much more difficult, and often not appreciated, is the hard work and tough decisions that go into putting our fiscal house in order, growing the economy and investments, and creating jobs and bringing essential services to the doorstep of the poor," Bunye said.

DJC. Calimbahan Jr.

US banking on RP leadership in Asean

By Veh Contreras

A SENIOR US OFFICIAL STEERSAY SAID Washington is looking forward to the Philippine chairmanship of Asean in the next 12 months for help in diplomatic efforts to bring stubborn-ruled Burma and defiant North Korea back into the "Asian mainstream."

"The Philippines will be very much in the center of that with its chairmanship of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations [this year]," said ambassador Christopher Hill, US assistant secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs.

Manila last week took over from Kuala Lumpur the two-year, rotating chairmanship of the 10-member Asean.

Speaking before students and academics in Manila, Hill described Burma and North Korea as examples of states that had "gone out of step with Asia" while enjoying serious political and economic resources in the region.

Burma is "frankly speaking, not giving anywhere near its potential because the regime [there] while Myanmar has tried to develop nuclear weapons despite lacking the "required [to do so] fuel," he said in a talk at the De La Salle University.

"I think it's very important for countries in Asean to look at Burma and see what can be done to help and I know the Philippines is very concerned and we look forward to working with the Philippines on this," the American diplomat said.

On North Korea, Hill stressed Washington has chosen not to regard the Pyongyang's nuclear program as a matter of "US problem but a regional problem," noting how the latter view has been codified in the US-led, six-nation talks on the North's nuclear building.

The six-party negotiations—which include Japan, China, Russia, and New Zealand—failed to lure North Korea's ruthless-led Kim Jong-il into the talks.

Talks have been stalled since November after Pyongyang objected to US penalties on companies it suspects of aiding North Korea in counterfeiting and drug-running.

The agency for talks has increased their North Korea-led launched nuclear missiles earlier this month, including trans-Atlantic capable of hitting US territories.

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo shakes hands with visiting US Assistant Secretary Christopher Hills Malacañang Monday. STORY

Hopes up for peace tool being tested in RP

By Norman Bordadora

IF THIS CAN WORK IN THE Philippines' trench-divided areas in Mindanao, it can work anywhere in Israel and Lebanon, too.

The United Nations Children's Educational Fund (Unicef) said the Australian agency for International Development on its immobility of plan to stage a series of telecommunications meant to foster peace and understanding between warring groups.

"You have a society of 7,000 islands. If it can work in the Philippines that is divided by ocean and money, it can work anywhere else," said Robin Pettifer, the lead coordinator of Peace Tech, a series of video conferences for senior officers, civil society, people's organizations and news rebels from 20 former conflict countries.

"If this works in your country we can do it in Israel and Lebanon, Iraq and Iraq, China and South Korea and all the other areas where there is prejudice," he added in an interview with the Inquirer.

Peace Tech yesterday conducted its first session between two groups—both composed of women in the conflict—from Luzon and Mindanao. Our group/team at the University of the Philippines in Diliman, while the other participated in Cotabato.

Technically's session that used two group officers using a team three to one dollars getting host in the armed conflict and a Moro Islamic Liberation Front controller monitor ensuring the need to order the cost cause of the conflict.

There were also a Muslim peace advocate representing rural up of the night of a northern lobby who are among those displaced when government troops bombed their village.

Those Tech is relevant to the Philippines where geographic restrictions have peace dialog. It gives young people in remote areas an opportunity to instantly reach out," Pettifer said.

Aside from United and AusAid, other groups involved in the project are Applied Development Foundation, formerly Tabang Mindanao and Profiled.

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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday, August 1, 2006
17th Week in Ordinary Time
Alphonsus Liguori

1st Reading: Jer 18:1-11
Gospel: Matthew 13:10-17

Jesus said this to the crowds in parables: "A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seed fell on the path, and birds came and ate it up. Other seed fell on rocky ground, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, since the soil was not deep, but when the sun rose, the plants were scorched and withered, since they had no roots. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. But other seed fell on rich soil, and produced grain, some a hundred, some sixty, some thirty times what was sown. Whoever has ears should hear."

Commentary:

The prophet Jeremiah's image is one the divine potter of the people. They are to act out repentantly and so to avoid the fate that was theirs if complacent. Briefly the people are told their misfortunes have brought upon them, to avoid death for God's sake to obey and live.

And Jesus explains to the disciples more meanings than they cannot understand because they are closed to his words. He, the Son of Man, the sower has set out to the actual, symbolic and in the Book of God, and all his other powers to save, that are those who are open or increasing in seeing, knowing and listening into the field. But those with a judgment would and have a redeeming and reading out. Without it is those that Jesus says.

Corrections

IN THE JULY 31 ISSUE, a front-page story—"Ex-secret lab sights for GMA"—reported that Dr. Jaime Galpo-Gervasio, state-as-leading physician of President Macapagal-Arroyo, is the medical director of St. Luke's Medical Center. The position is currently held by Dr. Javier Gamotag.

IN THE JULY 31 ISSUE, a business story on Page B2-1—"Win P1 million with just a text"—misstated the format of the text message that consumers should send to join the SMS Pesoyan sa Buslo celebrity promo. Consumers may subscribe valid by sending the following to 8777—the keyword "PSK," the Tax Identification Number printed on their receipt issued by the merchant (not the TIN of the cashier), point, the receipt number and the amount (PSK <space> TIN <space> receipt <space> AMOUNT).

Readers may send their requests for corrections (limited to what is in the Day Lists, Philippine Daily Inquirer, 5th Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Makapilis Street, Makati City, fax No. 897-9737/897-9744, e-mail address: dailylist@inquirer.com.ph.

Complaints about lack of fairness or objectivity may be sent to Letitia Stark, reader's advocate, e-mail address: readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph or fax No. 897-9737/897-9744. Also: Readers Advocate, Box phone number is 897-0000, ext 382.

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Court finds 2 Army soldiers guilty of killing 7 in Mindoro

By Tina G. Santos

A MANILA JUDGE YESTERDAY found three persons, including two Philippine Army soldiers, guilty of killing seven people and wounding two others in Victoria, Oriental Mindoro, six years ago.

Convicted of homicide and frustrated homicide were S/Sgt. John Rabin and Sgt. Hamid Ambolo, former members of Task force Ibis Drill, a counterinsurgency unit based in Barangay San Isidro in Victoria, and Jaime Gilbuy, who was charged as an accomplice.

Judge Myra Garcia-Fernandez of Regional Trial Court Branch 39 sentenced Rabin and Ambolo from eight to 17 years in prison for each of seven counts for the killing of former Victoria Councilor Honorio Merilla, Interaphon Jaw Dhapan, Jesse Matibay, Military Asimus, and brothers Eugene, Antonio and Andres Bagay.

They were also sentenced to an additional four to 10 years for each of two counts of frustrated homicide for the wounding of Merilla's wife Nida and Basilio Avila.

Gilbuy was sentenced on two counts to spend between four and 10 years and another four months in four years in prison.

The court also ordered the three to indemnify the heirs of their victims a total of P3.4 million in damages.

Court records showed the killing happened on the evening of April 3, 2000, in a billiard hall in Barangay Poblacion III in Victoria.

Witnesses said the accused, apparently drunk, sneaked into the hall and shot the victims without provocation.

The accused, on the other hand, claimed the victims attacked them, prompting them to defend themselves.

The court found the prosecution victims more believable.

"The positive testimonies of witnesses...should prevail over the bare denial of the three accused," it said.

But it ruled that the accused were liable only for homicide and frustrated homicide "in the absence of any circumstance qualifying the killing to murder."

'Orphaned' district gets caretaker

By Philip C. Tubeza

SPEAKER JOSE DE VENECIA HAS DESIGNATED Eastern Samar Rep. Marcelino Libanan as the "caretaker administrator" of Southern Samar's second congressional district which was left vacant by Rep. Bienvenido Veloria who died last Wednesday.

Libanan has accepted his new assignment.

"I humbly accept the designation even if it would mean additional responsibility on my part, so that the constituency of Rep. Veloria will not be deprived of basic services and assistance," Libanan said.

The Speaker's decision was based on the request of Veloria's constituents who wanted Libanan to look after them.

De Venecia announced Libanan's designation during the sociological rites on Friday for Veloria, who died of cirrhosis of the liver at the National Kidney Transplant Institute.

"I was not informed beforehand by the Speaker about it so I was completely surprised when he made the announcement. Nevertheless, I humbly accept his decision and will abide by it," he added.

Libanan, however, assured his son congressman in Eastern Samar that his additional task will not in anyway affect his services to them.

So that every Asian may live in dignity

THE 2006 RAMON MAGSAYSAY AWARDS

Honoring greatness of spirit shown in service to the peoples of Asia

EK SONN CHAN
CAMBODIA
2006 Awardee for Government Service

ENSURING SAFE AND AFFORDABLE WATER FOR ALL

As a young engineering graduate, Ek Sonn Chan lost his entire family to the killing fields of the Khmer Rouge. Managing to survive as a farmer, he found work in 1979 in Phnom Penh, and rose to greater responsibilities until in 1993 he was appointed to head the Phnom Penh Water Supply Authority (PPWSA). The water system he inherited was barely a system at all, a labyrinth of broken church and years-at-the-mercy-the-flower-water-system-which-dropped-to-Widespread water loss from leaks, and theft, a chronic water shortage, an operating bloopers to engineers. With so few people to serve, there was very little money. But the role model of the challenges Ek Sonn to address. With determination and uncommon management, he turned the water system around, improving accountability, closing illegal connections, and most importantly, convincing he staff to work professionally to deliver reliable public service. Today, the Authority's water supply is so by 100 percent, collection rate is 99 percent, and things still water is flows outside in the city's poorest neighborhoods.

The Foundation recognizes Ek Sonn Chan's rehabilitation of a ruined public utility bringing safe drinking water to a million people in Cambodia's capital city.

PARK WON SOON
KOREA
2006 Awardee for Public Service

FOSTERING ACTIVIST CITIZENSHIP AND FEARLESS PHILANTHROPY

Despite imprisonment on a university student during South Korea's military dictatorship, Park Won Soon completed his legal studies and found himself defending one of the country's most notorious political dissidents. Forging the country's unprecedented legal career, he defended the rights of political prisoners and victims of media censorship, torture, and other abuses. In 1994 he helped found the People's Solidarity for Participatory Democracy (PSPD), devoted to the organizational campaign against corruption by the politicians of government corporate, in Seattle. PSPD sponsored a controversial effort to Roh Moo-candidate in the 2002 election. Park was elected by the voters, as candidate to in the PSPD leadership. But soon were rejected by the voters. After joining DUP, became a national force. Park resigned down to re-lead, in 2002 he assumed leadership of The Beautiful Foundation, which challenges conventions in Korean society to donate just ten percent of their income to cause, thus redistributes the money to the needy and to public-interest groups. More than 30,000 have joined, embodying traditional Korean habits of generosity.

The Foundation recognizes Park for unbridled activism fostering social justice, for courageous practice, clean government, and a generous spirit in South Korea's young democracy.

EUGENIA DURAN APOSTOL
PHILIPPINES
2006 Awardee for Journalism, Literature and Creative Communication Arts

UNVEILING THE PEOPLE'S RIGHT TO THE TRUTH

When Martial Law closed down the country's independent newspapers in 1972, Eugenia Apostol suddenly lost her editorial job in a matter-daily. Initially working in a women's magazine, she later launched a new magazine with the big name, *Mr. & Ms.* In 1980 she founded a few-lines editor, re-publishing previously-quiet critical of the dictatorship. For the anniversary of Ninoy Aquino's own murder, Apostol's dissident journals defying the regime. By 1986, innovatively published photographs and text depicting the public's overwhelming opposition to the ruling. Thereafter, Apostol became editorial-in-chief of *Malaya*, and the young opposition. A chronic hunger for the truth engaged up copies by the hundreds of thousands. As the political crisis deepened, she rose to lead the country's first independent newspaper, leading the Philippine Daily Inquirer until 1994. she built the PDI's reputation on integrity, truthfulness, and independence. By entering the City, in 1998, she established the Daily Times, expanding, to President Estrada's attempt to muzzle the media and to the public's chance for the truth about its exceptional wealth and wayward leadership.

The Foundation recognizes Tes courageous example in placing the truth-telling duty on the years of rule struggle for democratic rights and honest government in the Philippines.

SANDUK RUIT
NEPAL
2006 Awardee for Peace and International Understanding

AWAKING SIGHT: RESTORING MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY

Born in Nepal, Dr. Sanduk Ruit completed his medical training in India and returned to his country as a government health officer. Specializing in ophthalmology, he learned that his country had the highest blindness rate, where surgical techniques using implanted intraocular lenses. By 1994 Ruit was personally teaching the new technique to Nepalese eye surgeons. Wishing, however, to target cataract blindness in Nepal's many remote villages, he developed an inexpensive method for implanting lenses that could be done in a single day, in the open air, in a village school. He opened the Tilganga Eye Centre (TEC) in 1994, providing an integrated system of ophthalmologic services. TEC manager has expanded into a lab, research, and training facility, where Ruit's innovations have developed and tested, now numbering over 500, to revolutionary low cost, state-of-the-art implant lenses, impacting them to 90+ countries. Ruit's eye camps and his sight-restoring techniques have expanded to China, Bangladesh, Cambodia, India and North Korea.

The Foundation recognizes Tes placing Hand at the frontlines of developing safe, efficient, and economical procedures for cataract surgery, enabling the needlessly blind to see the joyous countries at no agony."

ARVIND KEJRIWAL
INDIA
2006 Awardee for Emergent Leadership

ACTIVATING COMMUNITY-BASED ANTI-CORRUPTION INITIATIVES

As a tax officer with the Indian Revenue Service, Arvind Kejriwal understood how easily government power can pervert citizens can be abused. Disturbed by the ubiquity of everyday corruption and by oppressive effects on ordinary taxpayers, he took leave from his civil-rule organized Parivartan, a citizens' movement to help people get basic services from government by empowering ordinary citizens to join forces. "Fighting with citizens for grassroots, Parivartan worked to make the tax department more transparent and less oppressive, using collective appeals to the authorities. Ring-outs and building up one's rights, people can use their appeal to emphasize the movement's proposed reforms. Since then, Parivartan has helped 700 tax-related grievances on behalf of individuals it has solved some 1,500 more with the threat of such action. In landmarked, citizen-analysis of New Delhi, Kejriwal led workers to do a "social audit" of new right-to-food public works projects, exposing inefficiencies to stirs from of the projects. Today residents monitor project funds by Made, so-called map bugs and the contract's details have been made public.

The Foundation recognizes Tes extraordinary leader's spirit on informative movement at the grassroots, empowering New Delhi's poorest citizens to fight corruption by leading government accountable to the people."

ANTONIO MELOTO
PHILIPPINES
2006 Awardee for Community Leadership

MOBILIZING FAITH AND GENEROSITY TO BUILD HOMES FOR THE POOR

In the Philippines, these pockets of the country's urban families occupy what are called "makeshift dwellings in informal settlements." Home, in other words: Antonio Meloto and the Gawad Kalinga Community Development Foundation are at the forefront of transforming these environments into livable communities with decent housing, basic social services, and self-governing neighborhoods.

Born to humble circumstances, Antonio Meloto had become a successful businessman when he decided to re-assess his life priorities. Increasingly haunted by a nagging urban-poor city, Meloto found that a handful ministry, he called Gawad Kalinga (GK), which means "to give care." Meloto's vision of Philippine society was that of a country where everyone would have more than love and spiritual nourishment; they also needed dignity and decent living conditions. He decided to build homes. With supporters and volunteers from all walks of life, Meloto began to build houses, and then entire communities. By 2005 Gawad Kalinga was constructing 100 homes a week, a neighborhood with safe, sturdy, and attractive homes – the first Gawad Kalinga (GK) village. Meloto developed guidelines for later GK projects: participatory design decisions and volunteers, brought expensive Filipinos into GK's economic development, and added health education, and livelihood components to GK villages. Under his leadership, GK copied into a network of hopping. "Filipinos at home and abroad catered to help address their country's enduring poverty. Convinced by Meloto that they could really make a difference, they gave generously of their money and time. GK villages began to proliferate throughout the country.

The Foundation recognizes Tes inspiring Filipinos to follow each pride that there are be a nation without slums."

GAWAD KALINGA
PHILIPPINES
2006 Awardee for Community Leadership

It was a place and that Antonio Meloto in the face of Gawad Kalinga. But the motivation he started is now much bigger than himself. In 2006, Gawad Kalinga has thousands of basic – parents, donors, volunteers, beneficiaries – reflecting many Filipino cultivation, social classes, and faiths. Volunteers include corporate executives and staff, students, government workers, OCWs, even street families. GK village residents build their neighbors' homes and construct or rebuild neighborhood centers. Already the movement has built new homes for over 40,000 families affected by disasters in Luzon and Visayas, and led "Bayo Bahle" for hundreds of displaced Muslim Filipinos in Mindanao. The volunteer dimension to the transformation of poverty-stricken neighborhoods into safe, friendly, middle class communities. But for the GK movement's members and supporters it is also their personal transformation from ignoring the poverty around them to becoming part of its lasting solution.

The Foundation recognizes Gawad Kalinga's "Bringing up dignity and promise of Filipino all could not to confront poverty in the Philippines and provide every family the dignity of a decent home and neighborhood."

RAMON MAGSAYSAY AWARD FOUNDATION

On Ramon Magsaysay Award Day's individuals when life and work exemplify the same selfless spirit that prompted the award – the same pride and achievement for which President Ramon Magsaysay is remembered. Nominations may be made by any person in any of the world's poorest countries.

The public is cordially invited to view the 2006 Ramon Magsaysay Awardees at the Awards Presentation Ceremonies at 4:00 P.M. on August 31, 2006 in the Main Theater, Cultural Center of the Philippines, Roxas Boulevard, Manila.

Ramon Magsaysay Center · 1680 Roxas Boulevard, Manila, Philippines · http://www.rmaward.org.ph

Inquirer founding chair wins RM Award

MELOTO

election amid a deepening political crisis in December 1985, ignored and other journalists set up the Philippine Daily Inquirer. Their equivocal leadership on Cemanes Aquino's drive for the presidency and its jubilant climax—the 1986 John People Power Revolution that toppled the Marcos dictatorship.

"I was just doing what should have been done. Journalists have to tell the truth," she said of the important role she played in reclaiming her country's press freedom and restoring its democracy.

By the time Agnaed retired as PDI chair and publisher in 1998, the business had established itself as the country's No. 1 newspaper.

Other awardees

Meloto, executive director of Gawad Kalinga, won the award for community leadership "for inspiring Filipinos to believe with pride that there can be a nation without shame," the Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation said in announcement.

Gawad Kalinga was likewise honored with the award for community leadership for "harnessing the faith and generosity of Filipinos the world over to confront poverty in the Philippines and provide every family the dignity of a decent home and neighborhood."

Gawad Kalinga, which now targets 11 towns ago by volunteer Jose Cha religious organization Couples for Christ, has built more than 850 housing developments for free for more than 100,000 grateful families. It is committed to building 7,000 more communities by 2010.

The charity is powered by donations, mostly from overseas Filipinos who "despaired over their country's stubborn poverty and yearned to do something about it," the foundation said.

In the Philippines, "40 percent of its urban families occupy what the Asian Development Bank calls makeshift dwellings in informal settlements," it said.

Cesario Ela, 56, a convener of the Ilonggo Bridge Initiative, was honored with the award for government service for "his exemplary rehabilitation of a ruined public utility bringing safe drinking water to a million people" as head of the Phoenix Rich Water Supply Authority.

"He soothed his blunted work force for the best and brightest and set them to work—fencing and repairing the system's myriad leaks, installing thousands of water meters, and clearing hundreds of thousands of illegal connections," the foundation said.

He installed a computerized billing program. Rumored by Pioneer, and persuaded each or leaders that his agency was a good risk. In 1997, Ela's agency became an autonomous public enterprise and, supported by international loans, underwent a major overhaul.

Principled activism

South Korea's Park, 56, head of The Beautiful Foundation and the Hope Institute, won the award for public service. He was honored for "his principled activism fostering social justice, fair business practices, clean government and a generous spirit in South Korea's growing democracy."

Park challenged individuals and corporations to donate 1 percent of their income or time as part of efforts to rekindle Korean generosity and popularize philanthropy. More than 26,000 people have responded, and the foundation has close financial ties to many of the country's top companies.

Nepal's Rule, 54, head of the Tilganga Eye Center, won the award for peace and international understanding for "placing Nepal at the forefront of developing safe, effective and economical procedures for cataract surgery, enabling the needlessly blind to regain the poorest countries to see again."

India's Kejriwal, 38, head of a citizen's movement against corruption called Parivartan, was honored for emergent leadership for "activating India's right-to-information movement at the grassroots and empowering how India's poorest citizens to fight corruption by holding government answerable or the people."

This year's seven winners will be honored in ceremonies at the Cultural Center of the Philippines on Aug. 31 when they will receive a medallion, a certificate and a cash prize of $50,000 each.

With reports from AP

'Henry' expected to hit northern Luzon today

By Norman Bordadora

TROPICAL DEPRESSION "HENRY" IS expected to bring more rains over a large section of Luzon, including Metro Manila, and the western Visayas today.

Henry was spotted as of 4 p.m. yesterday at 90 km west northwest of Casiguran, Aurora, or 90 km east northeast of Baguio City with maximum sustained winds of 55 kph near the center.

The weather bureau Pagasa said Henry was moving west northwest at 15 kph and was expected to be 215 km west northwest of Baguio City or 280 km west southwest of Vigan, Ilocos Sur, this afternoon.

Public storm signal No. 1 has been raised over Aurora, Quirino, Nueva Vizcaya, Nueva Ecija, Isabela, Cagayan, Kalinga, Apayao, Mountain Province, Ifugao, Benguet, the Ilocos provinces, La Union, Abra, Pangasinan, Tarlac and Zambales.

Residents in areas under Signal No. 1 are alerted against possible flash floods and landslides.

Pagasa said northern and central Luzon will have rains and gusty winds with moderate to rough seas.

The rest of Luzon and the Visayas will experience cloudy skies with rainshowers and thunderstorms, becoming occasional rains over the western sections of southern Luzon and the Visayas which may trigger flash floods and landslides.

The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms, Pagasa said.

Honorable Gentleman Garcillano of Bukidnon?

Commissioner Garcillano is going to run for Congress in Bukidnon," Sen. Franklin Drilon said in a press forum in Manila, citing reliable sources.

Garcillano, a former election commissioner, is eyeing the seat to be vacated by Bukidnon Rep. Severo Acosta, whose third and final term ends in 2007, according to Drilon, president of the Liberal Party (LP).

Later at the Senate, Drilon named names, an official of his LP ruing, as the source of the information.

As far as Drilon is concerned, Garcillano's victory, if he gets to file a certificate of candidacy is a cinch.

"You now have Garcillano who undoubtedly will win the election, and now will be called honorable gentleman from the province of Bukidnon.' You have now Garcillano who is a member of Congress," he said at the forum at the Manila Hotel.

Good at counting

"He's good at counting," Drilon later said, joking with reporters at the forum.

After disappearing from public view months after the wiretapping scandal broke, Garcillano demand up on a Senate inquiry into the scandal in December last year, but only in deep regret he had conspired with the President to rig the results of the 2004 presidential vote.

At last Dec. 7, 2005, appearance, Garcillano, 68, skirted questions on whether he had his role if he had been caught in the wiretap, but he acknowledged talking to Mr Arroyo on the phone after the last vote. He also denied flying to Singapore at the height of the scandal.

Tapes of the tapped conversations between Mr Arroyo and Garcillano purportedly showing they conspired to rig the presidential election surfaced in June last year, triggering calls for Mr Arroyo's resignation and the filing of impeachment complaints against her.

Dismissed on technicality

The President has denied any wrongdoing.

Mr Arroyo won by more than 1 million votes over her closest rival, the late actor Fernando Poe Jr.

The impeachment was dismissed on a technicality as the administration-dominated House in early September last year.

The House committees that conducted the joint hearings have issued an inconclusive final report. Without closure to the wiretapping controversy, Mr Arroyo's legitimacy has remained in question.

Night of death, terror for Lebanese villagers

QANA, LEBANON—THE DEBRIS lay two storage shapes. Several had open manche filled with dirt. Bases were puffy. A man's arm was extended straight out from his body, his fingers spread.

Two tiny children, a girl and boy lay face-down in the bank of an ambulance, their skin like wax. In the all day assemble were trying the bodies from the remains of this one house...back-breaking for bearer at the site...endless of the dead carried.

Residents said as many as 60 people had been inside. News agencies reported that 56 had been killed, and that 34 of them were children.

The Lebanese Red Cross, which conducted the rescue, counted 27 bodies. As many as 17 were children. The youngest was 10, and the oldest was 95. One was in a wheelchair.

Old wound, fresh pain

This was the single most lethal episode in the course of this military war. The survivors will remember it as the day their children died.

Not the village, it is a fresh pain in a wound on years that 10 years ago when an Israeli attack here killed more than 100 civilians. Many of them were children, too.

The Israeli government apologized for that air strike, as it did for the one here on Sunday. It said that residents had been warned to leave and should have already been gone.

But leaving southern Lebanon now is dangerous, and pricey.

The two extended families staying in the house that the Israeli missile struck—the Shahboubs and the Hashems—had discussed leaving several times over the past two weeks. But they were poor. A taxi cost$, around $1,000, was unaffordable.

Risk of the road

And they drove a the risk of the road itself.

"We heard on the news they were bombing the Red Cross," said Ismeh Shahboub, a 22 year-old who survived the bombing. She was lying quietly in a hospital bed in Tyre.

"What can we do with all of our kids? There was just no way to go."

The first missile struck around 1 a.m., thrusting Mohamed Ghalboub, 36, into an open doorway. His five children, ages 12 to 2, were still inside the house, as was his wife, his mother and a 14-year-old nephew.

He intend on go as down, but minutes later another missile hit. By morning, when the rescue workers arrived, all eight of his family members were dead.

At the Hiram's Hospital in Tyre, Mohamed Ghalboub sat in bed. His face was black, stained. The children, he said, were in particular rows.

But 26-year-old Hala Ghalboub, who is two daughters, ages 1 and 3, were killed, was sweating and rocking slightly in her hospital bed.

"I want to see them," she said slowly. "I want to hold them."

New York Times News Service

Israel halts air strikes amid int'l outrage

From page A1

from Israel on Monday. US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice urged the UN Security Council to arrange for a ceasefire agreement by week's end that would include the formation of an international force to help Lebanese forces control southern Lebanon.

Even so, Israeli Defense Minister Amir Peretz made it clear in a speech in parliament that Israel would not agree to an immediate ceasefire as he declared plans to expand its operation in Lebanon.

"It's forbidden to agree to an immediate ceasefire," Peretz told the Knesset, even as several Arab legislators heckled him and demanded an immediate cessation of the offensive. "Israel will expand and strengthen its activities against Hezbollah."

Israel's top ministers were to discuss expanding the Army's ground operation at a meeting late Monday, while thousands of reserve soldiers trained for the possibility that they would be sent into Lebanon to participate in the 20-day-old fighting.

Massive questioned

On Monday Hezbollah legislator Hassan Fadlallah questioned Israel's motives in fighting so fiercely, telling Lebanese television it was just "an attempt to attack international indignation over the Qana massacre."

Nonetheless, he suggested that the Hezbollah militia may follow suit and suspend its attacks on Israel.

"Shelling Israeli settlements is a Lebanese reaction to shelling Lebanese civilians," he said. "When Israel stops its aggression on the south, on Lebanon, on the civilians, on the infrastructure, we could stop. But has Israel stopped its aggression?"

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert told Rice over the weekend that Israel would need 10 to 14 more days to finish its offensive, and Defense Minister Haim Ramon told Army Radio on Monday that he did not think the fighting was yet over.

"I'm convinced that we won't finish that war until it's clear that Hezbollah has no more abilities to attack Israel from south Lebanon. This is what we are striving for," Ramon said.

The mounting bloodshed in Qana increased international pressure on Washington to back an immediate end to the fighting and prompted Rice to cut short her Middle East mission.

Lasting settlement

In a nationally televised speech before leaving Israel, Rice said she would seek international consensus for a ceasefire and a "lasting settlement" in the conflict between Lebanon and Israel through a UN Security Council resolution this week.

"I am convinced that only by achieving both will the Lebanese people be able to control their country and their future, and the people of Israel finally be able to live free of attack from terrorist groups in Lebanon," Rice said.

The Israeli military said that the temporary cessation of aerial activity would allow the opening of corridors for Lebanese civilians who want to leave south Lebanon for the north and would maintain land, sea and air corridors for humanitarian assistance. The cessation did not include a ceasefire from the air by the elements of the organization of air strikes, the Army said.

The largest death toll from a single Israeli strike before Sunday was only several a dozen fatalities. The Qana attack, in which at least 54 children and 12 women were among the 56 dead, stunned Lebanon.

Heightening the anger were statements of a 1996 Israeli air strike bombardment that hit a UN base in Qana, killing more than 100 Lebanese who had taken refuge from fighting. That attack sparked an international outcry that forced a halt to an Israeli offensive.

Retaliation

Hezbollah vowed retaliation on its Al-Manar television, saying: "The massacre at Qana will not go unanswered." It is members is and on Sunday with 137 rockets—the highest one-day total during the offensive—will be in Israeli moderately wounded and 11 others lightly hurt, medics said.

Israel apologized for the deaths and promised an investigation, but said Hezbollah had fired more than 40 rockets from Qana before the air strike, including several at Israeli areas. One building that was bombed. Foreign militants officer Lebanon their accused Hezbollah of "using their own civilian population as human shields."

More than 750,000 Lebanese have fled their homes in the fighting, but many thousands more are still believed holed up in the south—many of them too afraid to flee on roads heavily hit by Israeli air strikes.

The attack on Qana brought Lebanon's death toll to more than 378 and pushed Western governments to a crucial juncture, as they at the United States found in Lebanon.

The Beirut government said it would no longer negotiate over a 15-point package without an unconditional ceasefire.

On Sunday Rice telephoned Lebanese Prime Minister Fuad Saniora and said she would stay in Jerusalem to continue work on a peace package, rather than make a planned Sunday visit to Beirut, Saniora said he told Rice not to come.

At the United Nations, the Security Council approved a statement expressing "extreme shock and distress" at the bloodshed and calling for an end to violence, stopping short of a demand for an immediate ceasefire.

In a jab at the United States, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan told the council in unusually harsh terms that he was "deeply dismayed" his previous calls for a halt were ignored.

"Action is needed now before many more children, women and men become casualties of a conflict over which they have no control," Annan said. AP

AFP FILE PHOTO | Air strikes killed scores of people in the ghastly looking Lebanese village of Qana.

Lawmaker warns of 'Muslim invasion'

By Michael Lim Ubac

WARNING OF A "SILOISE SEEN-tic invasion," Iranao del Sur Rep. Bayash Dalmapa yesterday urged the United Nations to stop Israeli attacks in Lebanon before the conflict escalated into a "world battle against Israel."

Dumarapa, chair of the House committee on social welfare, said she and other Muslim leaders in Mindanao would not tolerate an "unwanted pandemic" if the Organization of the Islamic Conference arrived at a unanimous decision to invade Israel.

"Many Filipino Muslims are willing to finance even a dozen-round of our fighters to join an international Israel if the OIC asks for it. The US must act now to stop the Lebanon carnage and bring the culprits to justice," she said.

Dumarapa issued the statement even as she not ordered a 48-hour suspension of air strikes in Lebanon to allow the evacuation of women, children and the rest of the civilian population from war zones.

She described Israel's aerial bombardment as "reckless" because it "kills dozens of innocent Lebanese."

She said the Muslim world mourned the killing of over 56 Lebanese civilians, many of them children, during an Israeli air strike in the village of Qana.

Dumarapa also endorsed Speaker Jose de Venecia's proposal on the United Nations to send a peacekeeping force to Lebanon that would help put an end to the violence and shield civilians from the crossfire.

De Venecia said his proposal to allow a small contingent of Philippine military personnel to be part of the peacekeeping force would "protect Filipinos trapped in Lebanon."

With a guitar, she kept her sanity amid blasts

From page A1

her mom—to keep her sanity amid the turmoil in that battered Middle East country.

Erin arrived with 30 fellow Filipino workers yesterday afternoon, with just her guitar and a few valises.

The rest of she made sure that her Philippine-made instrument would not be damaged on her long, difficult journey out of Beirut. "I took care of it even if it was a big difficult to carry. I wouldn't leave it," a sassy-eyed Erin told reporters in Filipino.

Erin was supposed to oblige a TV news crew with a song, but since the hordes of reporters surrounded her, she turned shy and broke into tears.

She gingerly placed her guitar back to its soft black case.

11 years in Lebanon

Erin worked in Lebanon the 11 years as a domestic helper. Under her days, she played the guitar in a catholic church in Tripoli.

She considered herself a religious song, mostly at the Filipino" volunteer center in Beirut—the Church of the Miraculous Medal—as Israeli bombs pounded Lebanon.

Erin said she had asked her late friend to buy the guitar in the Philippines a few years ago. His friend carried it with her from Manila to Saudi Arabia and Cyprus to Lebanon.

She said she was lucky that her Lebanese employer had allowed her to return to the Philippines for her own safety, and even gave her passport in bri.

Chocolates and cigarettes

Like the many other Filipino workers nearly abandoning helpers, who had arrived ahead of them, seven of Erin's companions had run away from their employers and mostly used travel documents provided by the Philippine Embassy to get them home.

Her group—the 19th batch of OFWs to be evacuated out of Lebanon—was also lucky to have met on a stopover at the Doha Airport some kind-hearted fellow Filipinos workers who gave them chocolates and cigarettes.

Erin Pelicias said she and the other Filipinos spent 16 hours at the airport and being stopped-over, they ended up eating their supper leftover in Lebanon.

"They learned that we had left with no money and gave them to us," Pelicias said, showing reporters the chocolates and cream of cigarettes.

"They were gifts to be handed out when we returned to the Philippines," she said.

Those Filipino workers were on their way home, too, this time from war-torn Iraq.

As of press time, a total of 13 Filipinos had arrived at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

Chet Antayan, spokesperson of the Department of Foreign Affairs, said 151 other OFWs were expected to arrive yesterday in three different batches.

A 150-chartered flight, originally scheduled to arrive today, with 340 Filipino workers is expected to arrive tomorrow afternoon instead, Antayan said.

The next two chartered flights carrying 400 OFWs each are expected to arrive on Friday and Sunday.

The US-funded International Organization for Migration (IOM) paid for these chartered flights for the Filipinos.

Bombs were a blessing

With the arrival of the OFWs on the chartered flights, Antayan said there should be some 2,900 Filipinos evacuees.

The bombs that fell on Lebanon also turned out to be a blessing for two other domestic helpers, Jocelyn Dalang, 32, of Santa Cruz town in Davao Del, and Grace Lucero, 33, of Cauayan City.

They said the Israeli bombard. more gave them an opportunity to escape from employers they said had mistreated them.

Antayan and Lucero were among the first batch of Filipino workers to return home following the outbreak of war in Lebanon.

Antayo, a single mother, left for Lebanon in August last year, hoping to ease the P300,000 debt she had incurred in Manila. She reportedly pay promised her as a maid to support her three children through school.

Hanging on

Her father had to sell his rice land to help her pay her placement fee. But she ended up almost killing herself.

"I almost lost my mind and thought of committing suicide because of the punishment that I had to endure from my employer," she said.

Only the thought of her three children and her faith in God made her hang on, Antayo said.

The maltreatment included being forced by her Lebanese employer to work almost 24 hours a daily and her meals being limited to two slices of bread a day she said.

Suicide notes

Once, after she failed to iron her employer's gown quickly, he placed a flat iron on her stomach, she said.

Her second set of employers, a Ukrainian woman and her Lebanese husband, treated Antayo no differently. And they did not give her her salary, she said.

She and her employers did not always see to erase the house and prevented her from using the phone or sending letters to her family.

It was then she thought of killing herself and wrote suicide notes in the hand to check pregnancy she was keeping.

Finally released by her employer, Antayo next worked on a farm but escaped on July 5 and, with the help of a cab, was able to reach the Philippine Embassy in Beirut.

Shoved into toilet bowl

Now she is appealing to the government to help her collect $2,200 (P113,432) in unpaid salaries during her 11 months stay in Lebanon.

Lucero's plight was no different.

She left her family in Catalan to work in Lebanon on a two-year contract supposed to pay $500 (P15,460) a month.

But Lebanese lasted out to be a night mare for her.

When she failed to clean the subway, her left hand was singed with cigarette butts, Lucero said. On seeing a hair strand on the floor, her female employer would drag her to the bathroom and shove her head into the toilet bowl.

Lucero said she worked from 3:30 a.m. to midnight, subsisting on bread.

Filipino-Lebanese

She said she fled after her male employer tried to rape her. An American helped her by paying for the cab that took her to the Philippine Embassy.

"The sun was a blessing in disguise," she said.

The evacuees also included Anthony Bulloro, 18, and his brother, Ronald, 26.

Among the Filipino-Lebanese children whose families were evacuated by the war, the Bulloro brothers were the Philippines to join their Filipino mother Epifania and another brother who had left Lebanon before the Israeli bombardment began.

"I know how difficult it is to a war, so I sent for the children," Epifania said.

In a wheelchair

A Nigerian returned from Lebanon in a wheelchair with fractures on her feet and leg, and stitches on her face.

Lionel Sabalo, 20, of Sta. Barbakan City, told the Inquirer that she was not hurt in the war but was injured before the fighting broke out when her trade employer, who drove too fast, crashed into a ditch in Beirut.

Sabalo, who had been working in Lebanon for three years, said that when the war began, her employer turned her over to the agency that hired her and she was later rescued by the Philippine consulate in Lebanon. With reports from Carlo J. Gomez, Phil Hiparas Bernas, and Germelina A. Lacorte, PDI Middeast Bureau Asia

3 assassinations in a day: 2 activists, a lensman

By Inquirer staff

2006), another 47 the number of hostile members claim during the same period.

"Mr. Arroyo's Sona statements have ushered in a frenzy wave of extrajudicial killings for which her government is totally accountable," Bayan Deputy Secretary General and Bayan Muna head Saturnino Ocampo said.

Other leftist leaders said Mr. Arroyo's tribute in her Sona to counterinsurgency Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan for his role in the crackdown on communist insurgents had served to encourage the attacks on militants.

Gloria and her husband, Bayan Muna councilor Crisanto "Chando" Clarete, were in a Land Cruiser taking their daughter Leonardo, 7, to school at 6:40 a.m. when they were attacked by gunmen in Carmen in Tabuk town.

'Doctor of the reasses'

Police said two of the gunmen got out of one of the cars and shot the couple.

The killers were armed with an M-16 rifle and .45-cal. handguns, witnesses said.

Gloria, an ob-gyne who was also known as "Doctor of the masses" and a stalwart of human rights lawyer William Claver, was wounded in the arm and chest.

Their daughter survived but was in shock, a relative told the Inquirer.

Army denial

A passerby was also hit by stray bullets.

In June, the Clarete couple told the Inquirer they had received reports that they were on a hit list allegedly drawn up by Army intelligence.

The Clarete had led rallies condemning the recent killing of militant leader Marcial Bangit.

Maj. Victor Tangcawehel Jr., 5th Infantry Battalion civil-military operations said head, drained the military had a hand in the attack on the Clarete.

"If they have evidence, they can file charges in court. The Army does not kill innocent civilians," he said.

Gunshots in a bus

Garcia, the UFS leader and a second-year student at Aquinas University, was on a bus en route to Legazpi City when he was shot four times by an assailant, police said.

He suffered bullet wounds in the head, chest and arm, and died on the spot.

Garcia was with his younger sister, Bernice Angela, also a student, and his aunt, Marivic Moreno, when he was attacked at 6:15 a.m.

Bernice said she but was already moving when she heard gunshots. When she looked behind her, she saw a man shooting at her brother, who was seated at the rear.

The other passengers scrambled out after hearing the gunshots.

Some witnesses said the killer escaped on a motorcycle with a companion.

Rainy day coverage

Investigators said they had no suspect and an idea of the motive behind the killing of Garcia, the second UFS leader slain in Bicol this year after UFS chair Cris Ruga-who was killed in Legazpi.

Ruga's case remains unsolved.

Police said Bicol's Midwifery was obviously geared up for a rainy day coverage, wearing a raincoat, a jacket and a black belt bag, when four armed men shot him in a one-way alley at Lapu Gorres compound in Sorsogon at around 8:30 a.m.

Michaela Garcia, a cousin of reporter Alfredo Perolino, who was murdered in May.

Sealed letter

Melendres's assassin wore black jackets with hoods and short Bisaya dyes in the chest, shoulders and below the nape, said Northern Police District Director Chief Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil.

The gunmen used a .22-cal. pistol and a .38-cal. revolver, said Insp. Albert Ignacio.

Bataoil said Melendres apparently thought he would be killed like Cornelio because he left a sealed letter with instructions that it be opened if he was killed.

"He knew who were out to kill him and decided it in his letter," Bataoil said.

One of two people mentioned in the letter has been taken in for questioning, police said.

Linked to Ornelio slay

"It would be submitted to the crime laboratory and would be part of the evidence," Bataoil said.

He said investigators believed the killing of Melendres was connected to the slaying of Ornelios. Police suspected a "personal vendetta" was behind Ornelios's death.

"The investigators are looking into all angles concerning the two deaths," Bataoil said.

He said he had sought the help of from Prosecutor Emmanuel Velasco in unveiling people accused in the Ornelio killing.

Three people have been charged with killing Ornelios, but no arrests have been made. Those charged were Rommel Llorina, Rolando Monong and Franklin Cobo Jr.

GMA blamed

Two police officers were named earlier as possible masterminds in Ornelios's killing but were dropped for lack of evidence.

Melendres left a wife, Maria Liberty, and five children aged 3 to 15.

Relatives said that after Ornelios was killed, Melendres replaced him as president of their homeowners association and had been helping residents in the area to acquire the land on which they had been considered squatters before, according to Melendres's uncle, Ernesto Rosales.

"The past few days saw another resurgence in political killings, right after this Arroyo's Sona. Also the President mentioned Palparan, those responsible for these killings were emboldened to do more," said Renato Reyes, secretary general of Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan).

Unfair to blame police

Reyes accused Task Force Usig (the police unit created to investigate the killings of militants, of not doing enough to stop the murders in some cases.

Deputy Director Gen. Avelino Razon, chief of the task force, said it was unfair to accuse the police of inaction.

He said the police leadership had directed field commanders to personally check investigations and even some others to arrest suspects.

Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno said the killings had continued because of the leftist groups' refusal to trust the police to protect them.

"We have been telling these groups, like Bayan, to tell us if there is a threat and we will provide them with police security. But they would not tell us about these threats," Puno told the Inquirer.

He said that Task Force Usig would be making records "identity." *With reports from Jonathan Bogtas, PDI Central Luzon (Aril, and Jaclyn S. del Puerto, Newsman Bondoc-ria and Philip E. Subaya in Manila*

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
GOVERNMENT SERVICE INSURANCE SYSTEM
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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION

Marathon

EDUCATION SECRETARY JESLI LAPUS HAD NOT even assumed his seat as the Department of Education when he got a lot of criticism. One of the objections to his appointment is that he is not an educator, and therefore, not qualified to be secretary of education.

EDITORIAL

This does not follow. The late Raul Roco was not a career educator, and yet he made a very good secretary of education. He cleaned up the mess at the department, eliminating particularly corruption in the procurement of textbooks. It is true that Lapus is not a career educator, but he has had some experience as a teacher: he taught at Maryknoll College, Malaysia State University, Ateneo de Manila University and Asian Institute of Management.

Lapus is basically a manager, but he is also a versatile man who has made good in every field of endeavor that he undertook. At 20, he was auditor in charge of SGV & Co. At 23 he was chief finance officer of the Ilaneza Group. (Someone asked what he was doing at Ilaneza when he knew next to nothing about car batteries. But he helped turn the ailing company around.) At 29, he was managing director of Triumph International (Phils.) Inc., a multinational company that became the biggest operation of its kind in the world.

He was at various times director of the Union Bank of the Philippines, AFC Merchant Bank, Urban Bank and president of the Land Bank of the Philippines. He has also made a mark in public service, having been undersecretary of agrarian reform and representative of Tarlac for two terms, during which he was chairman of the Standing Committee on Live Arts for three consecutive years.

It was during his stint in Congress that Lapus exposed and corrected the multibillion peso automatic payroll deduction scheme at the DepEd which had chronically reduced the take-home pay of about 300,000 public school teachers.

Now, Lapus has his job cut out for him as a manager when he tries to straighten out the DepEd and put it in tip-top shape so that it can carry out its task of educating millions of students who will later be the citizens and workers of the republic. In a recent visit to the Philippine Daily Inquirer, Lapus said that the No. 1 item on his agenda would be the provision of "quality education" to all the students of the country. This is a very challenging job, considering how the system of education has deteriorated in the past three or four decades.

He will have to find ways to strengthen the teaching of English, Mathematics and Science where students have scored miserably in tests and international competitions. He will have to focus especially on the teaching of English, without at the same time degrading the progress that has been attained in the propagation of the national language.

He will have to make the curriculum more responsive to present-day needs. Already, Lapus has said that the National College Entrance Exam (NCEE) may have to be revived. That makes sense, because it is useless to give some young people a college education if, after graduation, it is discovered that they were not really meant to do white collar jobs. Instead, Lapus would have more vocational schools to cater to students whose aptitudes are different from those who enter college.

He will also have to upgrade the skills of the teachers. A possible model is the Mentoring the Mentors program of Christ Rufino. Teachers have to go through a course of continuing education to be able to keep up with the latest developments in pedagogy. Hence, the private sector, and particularly private schools, can be asked to help.

He will have to attend to the recurring problem of shortage of classrooms, desks and textbooks. He has already said he would ask for a bigger budget (P130 billion vs. P118 billion for 2006) for 2007. He will also ask Congress to pass a law requiring the Pagcor to allocate 10 percent of its annual sales to DepEd. He will re-launch the Adopt-a-School program to restore the interest and support of the private sector for education.

Lapus was reported to have "hit the ground running on his first day at work." He will not have much time to rest in his position as secretary of education. He is facing so many problems and so many challenges that he has to run a continuous marathon if he is to achieve some progress in his department.

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Philippine Daily Inquirer, Inc. 5th Floor, Media Center, Port Area, Manila
Telephone numbers: 896-6000 to 6099
Fax numbers: 896-6060 to 6099

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'Blowin' in the wind'

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

PEERED INTO THE 50-THOUSAND STATE of the Nation Address, the 13-round sentence didn't stick out. Most reaction cascaded on the President's gilttrip phrases, from empathizing to being "game" for those who'd pick off public cartridges. Then emerged the sentence that stuck.

"To save dollars, windmills in Batanes and Ilocos Norte now supplement into megawatts," the President said. But the 13-wind turbines of Southeast Asia's first wind farm, along Bangui Bay, now generates 19 percent of Ilocos Norte's electricity, cutting residents' bills by 7 percent. When completed, nearly half the province's electricity needs would come from wind. All those in a world guiding for $100 a barrel of oil.

Today, "wind is the world's fastest growing energy source," the Earth Policy Institute notes. Over the last 10 years, annual growth has topped 29 percent. Yet in 1980, it was almost zero.

Wind power is renewable, free of coal or diesel pollution or a "Chernobyl" threat. "Many countries are finding the cheapest way to produce electricity is to put it out of the sky," writes Christopher Flavin, author of "Power Surge."

India accounts for 62 percent of Asia's installed wind power wind electricity capacity. China's new "Renewable Energy Law" orders generate five times its present wind power capacity by 2010. Two thirds of current global capacity is installed capacity is in Europe. By 2030, wind power could satisfy 23 percent of European electricity needs.

Don Quijote de la Mancha wouldn't recognize the landscape today. Modern wind turbines are replacing those postcard windmills in that land, Denmark, parts of the United States, Australia, Germany China and Spain, specially in Pamplona.

For Filipinos, Pamplona conjures "running of the bulls" fiesta. Much of that comes from Hemingway and TV footage of this fiesta. But Pamplona's now home to "the Spanish's fastest growing wind energy industry." Pamplona once totally dependent on fossil fuel in 1995. Today, 26 out of every 100 persons they pay to be power generated by wind turbines.

Middle East instability is spurring the emerging offshore wind energy industry, particularly from the Pentagon, the think-tank Center Points to General Inside's steppes. "China would become a wind superpower," the Worldwatch Institute asserts. Inner Mongolia could fight northern China. The wind potential of Texas and the two Dakotas could generate enough power for much of the United States.

In 1998, the US National Renewable Energy Laboratory published "Wind Energy Resource Atlas of the Philippines." The DP National Engineering Center reviewed the study upon request of the World Wide Fund for Nature in Indonesia/Sydney.

(c) "The Philippines has good to excellent wind resource potential, enough to conservatively generate at least 76,000 megawatts ... Good to moderate potential wind park sites up to at least 170,000 megawatts."

(b) "Many areas [are] considered "good to excellent potential, were identified in a small mapping exercise. This included the northeast tip of Luzon and its high interior, notably the Cordillera, the coast along Camarines and Eastern Mindanao.

(c) "Ranging from just 18 percent of those "good to excellent corridors" would match "wind power demand sites."

Cebu newspapers thereafter prodded its leaders to get cracking. Compare with Ilocos Norte, urged a Cebu Daily News editorial. Ilocos officials were driving force, pushing with Banco Ilagado, the paper noted. They succeeded in getting on the short list of 23 projects submitted to Japan's Bank of International Cooperation.

"Cebu could lead if officials acted on this information decisively," the editorial groused. "But our officials are often the last to know... Nothing is more confusing than windmills of the mind to Cebu's indecisive leaders."

The self-satisfied Gibraltar executive clearly didn't know what Wind Resource Atlas was. "Windmills?" he replied to a question on its implications from editors. The fortune in his loose-tongued "windmills?" You could almost smell a mega-scale version of the 1980s crowding across his mind. But that's as far as his horizon went. "It's a short sighted," Khalil Gibran writes, "who looks only at the walls he wants to."

Those northern Philippines wind farms rather in 21st century technology a December 2005 Asia Inc editorial noted. "It's one thing for Ilocos Norte to 'lease Cebu" in hogging a project that now transmits, over a 42-kilometer, 230-kilovolt line, wind-generated power in the Luzon grid. "But it's another thing for Cebu's coming leaders to be cross-sleeves of what happened. We may be misled—and didn't even know it."

The wind power surge will continue into the 21st century, as Small fuel is depleted. Design breakthroughs achieved by Danish engineers in the 1970s are a "technology that has come of age." By June, 70 Vestas high Intrepid Turbines down, they're efficient, able to adjust from breezes to gales. Down time for maintenance is less than 1 percent. And soon the financing have dropped.

"In some markets, wind is less expensive than electricity from coal-fired plants," asserts Oliver Krischer, "Still Blowin in Wind Energy." If the lines of hydro plants, Angat and Maria Cristina are stretched by nothing resembled domestication and wind power is tapped, future electricity needs could be manageable.

That 13-word sentence in State endorsement the need for broad-based out-of-spending dependence on environmentally-bad sources.

"The answer," as the Bob Dylan pop song puts it, "is blowin' in the wind."

Happiness

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I REMEMBER AGAIN THE ECONOMIST WHO did a study of a "third World village with a view to determining the factors that improved quality of life, or the perception of it. I do not now recall the name of the economist or the village he studied, but I recall that he visited the village periodically to see how things had changed.

He was surprised at one point to find that most of the villagers agreed that their quality of life had dramatically improved. He looked at their current economic indices and compared them with the ones he had taken the last time. He saw that virtually nothing had changed, and that indeed they were worse off in some respects. He did a little doubting and swiftly discovered the source of the villagers' newfound buoyancy. Many of them were now wearing shoes. The outside fact had a tremendous impact on the villagers' sense of well-being.

That is not entirely surprising as it seems. There's a whole literature on shoes as a factor in self-esteem, and I half suspect hobbies bank with shoes has something to do with it. One very rarely notices the shoeless (the undead and rapists from within the shoeless).

But this is not a reform about shoes, this is a reform about happiness. I remembered the above in fact in relation to the various items I read over the past week about the studies ranking countries according to "happiness." One came out on the premise that Filipinos are. Then one done by a University of Leicester academic who also produced a World Map of Happiness. It ranked the Philippines 76th. The top five were Denmark, Switzerland, Austria, Iceland and Bahamas.

The survey follows several other surveys along the same line with widely disparate results. A bigger survey done by the marketing company GfK NOP which interviewed 30,000 people, proclaimed that the happiest nations on earth were Australia, United States, Japan, India, Britain and Canada. The British think tank, New Economics Foundation, which produced its own "Happy Planet" index based on 178 countries on the earth, had Vanuatu, a tiny South Pacific island group 3000,000), as the planet's most cheerful country. And it had the world's largest economies, Germany, Japan and the UK, at 81st, 95th and 150th respectively.

The wide divergence in results must suggest how alternately gratifying and humiliating the prospect of measuring happiness is. Unlike the amount of goods in a basket, the amount of happiness in the heart doesn't lend itself to exact arithmetic. It's not an objective thing, it is a subjective one. As the story of the straits dictator shows, people's sources of happiness vary widely from place to place.

On a not entirely facetious note, "happiness," as Pete Incaandez recently, is the term used by American workers for the "joy" that goes their way for attending press conferences. The amount of "happiness" rising and falling according to the importance of the writer and the project being pitched. You attend a press conference deaf, or several of them, which happily also gets you free meals. Along the way you would be absolutely gleeful by the end of the day. It's enough to make you think about shifting careers, or subjects.

I can see an upside and downside to the attempt to measure happiness as a measure of development. As their authors themselves argue, it's an effort to move away from the traditional measures of GNP, GDP and per capita income, which tend to equate wellbeing with material abundance. And which encourages consumerist values. As the New Economics Foundation suggests, the happiness index is meant to compel governments to rethink many assumptions.

That point I can subscribe to. Particularly in this country where the greed of public officials, and of the elite in general who continue to provide easy an order characterized by opulence on one hand and destitution on the other, runs out. Indeed, where acquisitiveness, a continuing legacy of American rule, holds sway, people measured not by the number of books on their shelves but by the number of cars in their garages. Makes you wonder. How much is enough? How many cellular phones and minivans can make you happy?

I've always thought the only thing that should be insatiable is the thirst for knowledge or the hunger for the realities of the spirit. Period.

The downside of it, well, the "happiness index can also encourage bovine smugness and lack of aspiration. The kind please, "mediocre-ism-kaffeyahoo" literally, "shallow happiness thrush, OK," or more idiomatically, "easy to please"). matches the opinio perfectly. Unfortunately, being easy to please isn't always a natural state, it can always be inflated. You don't need to go far to see proof of it, you need see only what's happened to us. From an Asian country next only to Japan and dreaming of becoming another Japan, we've become a Southeast Asian country that's below—all only than Burma and dreaming only of scrolling on dozens named names abroad. Today, we sing a job abroad and we're deliriously happy. Indeed, today we sing a job at home and we're bonelessly serene.

More importantly, many years ago during the get of martial law, I heard one of Imelda's associate patrons on his boat' favorite prescription for happiness, which was the "four, the Good, and the Beautiful. During the open forum someone asked, perfectly seriously, "But what if your spouse was cheating on you, would it pay to divorce the Beautiful, or would you be better off not knowing you were being cuckolded?" The speaker thought for a while and laughed. "Well," he said, "sometimes it really does not pay to know the truth. It can make you very unhappy."

A happy people can be a sign they are not thinking people. But it can also be a sign they do not know, or care, that they have a problem they did not see for.

Oversight committee monitors Sona targets

Political Tidbits

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

[illegible] Senate Majority Leader Francis "Kit" Pangilinan said yesterday that the Senate will not be left behind in the race to the 2007 elections.

Pangilinan said the Senate will also conduct oversight hearings on the implementation of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) and the Expanded CARP (CARPER) to ensure that the government's spending is not wasted.

"We will also conduct oversight hearings on the implementation of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) and the Expanded CARP (CARPER) to ensure that the government's spending is not wasted," Pangilinan said

The Bolante puzzle

IT TOOK THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN Affairs days to announce that former Agriculture Undersecretary Jocelyn "Joc Joc" Bolante had been taken into custody by the US immigration for violation of an unspecified US law. Former Solicitor General Frank Chavez cried conspiracy between the Philippine and US governments. He said the arrest was a plot to keep Bolante out of Philippine jurisdiction and prevent him from testifying on the P728-million fertilizer scam.

Let us not be too naive on the role of the Department of Foreign Affairs and its foreign service in serving the nation and its president.

During the time of President Ferdinand Marcos, foreign service posts were always on their best behaviour (unless Marcos was around. Filipino diplomats lined up to be under her beck and call. Spouses of diplomats and lower ranking officers hovered around her when she did her shopping sprees. And the head of the Philippine National Bank, with diplomatic smile, was ever ready to clean his checks to credit her accounts.

The fatal trip of Ninoy Aquino in August 1983 to Manila was mentioned...all the way—by foreign service officials from the Philippine ambassador in Singapore down the officials of Ninoy's landing—by what they claimed as "what ifs" ...at the Manila International Airport.

The reality on the United States of Ferdinand Marquinos was much more traumatic by the presence of the "Kelsey Boys" abroad. The consul general in New York at sixty days kept Manila informed on Washington's whereabouts. From the consul general in Los Angeles had to slow a wig just to be able to punctuate the meetings that were being attended by Marquinos in the area.

Going back to Cho Bolante puzzle, was his visa cancelled in mid-flight, considering that he was allowed to board the plane bound for the United States? Was it a consular slip or diplomatic conspiracy?

What is clear is that the consulate in Los Angeles, in this instance, was discouraged to render its consular duty to assist a Filipino national detained in Los Angeles, California. For the first time in living memory (see treaties...the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, and the RP-US Consular Relations—were not invoked "to protect," or at least to seek a visit and an interview of a national detained in a foreign port.

Has any high ranking government official been sent from Manila to assist Bolante? Did Frank Chavez hit a diplomatic nail on the head?

—HELEN R. LIVIA,
former ambassador,
mariant@yes.com

Fund transfer to PhilHealth made after 2004 elections

THIS IS IN REACTION TO THE JULY 26 column of Conrado de Quiros.

He wish to emphasize that there is no truth to De Quiros' claim that P500 million was transferred by the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration to PhilHealth in 2004 to be "paired-electoral purposes." In fact, the amount was transferred in no only in March 2005, long after the national elections in 2004. The first tranche worth P300 million was transferred on March 15 and the second and final tranche worth P200 million was transferred on Apr. 15. We have attested this fact in various fora, and our records show that the Comelec checks representing these amounts were cleared March 15 and Apr. 15, 2005, respectively.

Since we started administering the Medicare program for overseas Filipino workers in March 2005, we have been able to introduce major changes. We have streamlined the process that led to increased use of benefits by OFWs and their dependents here and abroad. We have also been able to complete the processing of more than 68,000 claims for medical cost refunds that we inherited from the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration and to pay out benefits that we received directly from OFWs for the period March to December last year. We had to introduce measures to ensure that we would immediately settle these claims for the benefit of our OFW members.

We have also updated our membership registration, claims processing and premium payment policies to accommodate these required to the needs of our OFW members and their kin in this context.

At present, we are exploring other means by which we can make our services more accessible to our members' overseas, including strengthening ties with Philippine consular offices abroad so that we can bring to the OFWs the good news on their medical case home. The We also have set weekly radio program through which we address OFWs' questions on their PhilHealth membership. The program is aired over an AM station that can be accessed by OFWs through the Internet as it airs.

We invite De Quiros to visit us at his convenience so that we can show him our records pertaining to the transfer of the Overseas Medicare Funds. It would be our pleasure to be of service to him and to the many others who have been wanting to know more about our program for OFWs.

—LIBERATO C. VELARDE,
acting president and CEO,
Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth)

A GIFTED official hands out a copy of guidebook on sex education.

Youth have the right to know about sex and sexuality

IT IS TRUE INDEED THAT IN THE PRE- and controversy over sex education, the voices of the youth—our eyes—is never addressed. Long touted as devices for safe sex, the condom (with inherent voids or holes measuring up to 5 microns) does not at all protect sex partners against the HIV (0.1 microns in size), and the pill, aside from being an abort-facient, has serious health effects on its users, with failure rates of 14 percent and 3 percent, respectively. pregnancy is inevitable for frequent users who are ignorant of the facts.

Second, sex education essentially is of three kinds: chastity education, biological sex education, and comprehensive sex education. What is taught, as shown in textbooks used in schools, is only the third type, which mainly talks about birth control, abortion, masturbation, homosexuality.

Contraception, self-control and love, which are very much part and parcel of human sexuality are never discussed seriously—or, worse, simply ignored.

Why the failure?

First, contraceptives simply don't work as perfectly and safely as claimed. Long touted as devices for safe sex, the condom (with inherent voids or holes measuring up to 5 microns) does not at all protect sex partners against the HIV (0.1 microns in size), and the pill, aside from being an abort-facient, has serious health effects on its users, with failure rates of 14 percent and 3 percent, respectively. pregnancy is inevitable for frequent users who are ignorant of the facts.

Second, sex education essentially is of three kinds: chastity education, biological sex education, and comprehensive sex education. What is taught, as shown in textbooks used in schools, is only the third type, which mainly talks about birth control, abortion, masturbation, homosexuality.

Contraception, self-control and love, which are very much part and parcel of human sexuality are never discussed seriously—or, worse, simply ignored.

Schools are supposed educate young people, not to create sex maniacs out of them.

People who view the Church as the dogmatic antagonist of sex education should relieve themselves of this unchecked mentality that impairs them from seeing the truth. As the forefront of this issue are the Filipino youth, we who have all the right to know about sex and sexuality not because the incidence of STD and teen pregnancy is rising, but because we want to mature as committed, responsible, and well-educated men and women.

And who says parents have got no role in sex education? Believe me, I know of parents who talk to their children about sex with utmost transparency. And they prove to be the best sex educators. Clearly, what is needed is the synergistic using of family ties and values which are the first weapons in conducting society's life.

—ANDREW E. ACEDO III,
andrew_jr.agasen@up.edu.ph

If you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions about the treatment of homes/orphans by the Inquirer, you may write to the Readers' Advocate, Philippine Daily Inquirer, 5/Floor Prime Avenue corner Major cor and Macapagal Streets, City of Makati or send a fax to (02) 896 6793, 897-4754, or e-mail reader-advocate@inquirer.com.ph

Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

Is GSIS helping or punishing retirees?

I AM NOW A RETIRED GOVERNMENT employee, 70 years old, with heart ailment and high blood pressure. I am residing in Cagayan de Oro City.

In January 2006, I applied for the GSIS e-Card were though, at that time, my husband was at the ICU of the Medical Center here. I thought that having a GSIS e-Card would make it faster and easier for me to get and encash my pension check.

That was about six months ago, and to date, I have yet to hear how I could get my pensions in a faster and easier way. How long do I have to wait?

You see, I still receive my pension checks by mail and because it takes three working days to clear an out-of-town check, I am able to encash them only after four to seven banking days from receipt. One pension is already not enough for our "maintenance" medicines; a delay of more than five days really affects our finances.

All that are pensioners are asking from the GSIS is to please help us. Don't punish us for being old and sickly. During our younger days, when we were still paying our GSIS premiums, I thought the GSIS was there to help us. Was I wrong?

—SONIA S. ALPAS PO,
24 Andres Bonifacio St.,
Carmen, Cagayan de Oro 9000

Across the NATION

NPA targets: Politicians, Army planes

LUCENA CITY—MILITARY STRATEGISTS OF THE COMmunist Party of the Philippines ordered New People's Army rebels nationwide to shoot down military planes and ambush "enemy" politicians and government officials.

In coverage of the CPP Military Commission (CPP/MC) to the NPA rebels, a copy of which was furnished the Inquirer, the commander-in-chief also ordered rebels to carry out the offensives, among many other new combat plans that had been spelled out in the directive titled "Major points in the tit for tat campaign against the US-directed war of terror."

They targeted NPA units to develop a strong underground base and prepare for tactical offensives in both rural and urban areas.

"Unit must be trained for special operations to weaken the regime economically and politically and to bring to justice the most reactionary officials of the highest level," said the CPP/MC message.

The CPP/MC maintained that the communist rebels, stationed in more than 100 guerrilla fronts nationwide, "can be the source of the special economic security of the armed city personnel and mobility for unit."

Last month, President Macapagal-Arroyo ordered the release of P1 billion to security forces as part of an "all-out war" policy to crush the 37,000-strong NPA by the end of 2010.

The President ordered the police and village officials in the 1,200 barangays nationwide to actively join the fight against insurgents.

Some 3,000 overseas soldiers from Mindanao and troops deployed in security details for government officials and VIPs are also to be sent to combat.

The communist leaders urged the NPA to punish government officials and politicians "while they are in their urban lairs or while they are moving about in the provinces."

"These theaters are more vulnerable physically when they go out on electoral and other campaigns of deception and use the roads and public places. As the decrepit regime seeks to destroy and outdraw the patriotic and progressive parties, the NPA is fully entitled to train its guns on the enemy politicians and their armed rabble who are engaged in armed counterrevolution," the message further said.

It cited the abandonment of tactics for the NPA to wipe out enemy units.

"These tactics include baiting and luring the enemy in deep, attacking or ambushing one enemy outpost to ambush the enemy reinforcements, attacking the enemy when his forces have become disorganized after pursuing forces when they are camped and when they are at rest, hitting the military planes while flying low or on the ground, and so on," the message added.

It reiterated that the rebels would continue using land mines.

"It can hamper enemy troops with the use of sniping, attack and counter-raids, supper units, RPG (rocket propelled grenades), mortars and land mines in order to inflict casualties, hamper enemy movement and demoralize the enemy forces," said the message.

It added: "A few kilograms of explosives and a few bullets go a long way in inflicting casualties and weakening the morale of the enemy."

The CPP/MC made it clear to the communist guerrillas nationwide that the opposition would still be the source of additional weapons from the enemies for the growing numbers of NPA recruits. Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

FOR KIDS? 2 BIG Like these visitors, nothing is too close for comfort as they draw near to where bars from Mayon work to travel at the Bonga Gulfy in Legaspi City.

Leftists asked to probe NPA use of land mines

BAGUIO CITY—AFP CHIEF OF STAFF GEN. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. has dared local and international human rights groups to investigate the New People's Army (NPA) and its use of land mines, saying it had killed and maimed not only government forces but innocent civilians as well.

Brig. Gen. Cardeno Datu, chief of the 6th Infantry Division, based in Cagayan de Oro City, told the Inquirer that the human rights groups, including the United Nations, should investigate the NPA's use of land mines rebels, under the Geneva Conventions, are prohibited by treaties.

On July 26, at least 15 people were wounded when two land mines planted by the rebels exploded along the highway in Tagaytay in Batangas de Dios.

Datu said the incident was "proof of their terrorist act."

"It's civilians they are targeting," Datu said.

Jorge Madlos, spokesperson of the National Democratic Front in Mindanao, apologized for the mistake. He said a team of rebels "mistook the progress for a military vehicle."

Despite what happened, Madlos said it would not give up using land mines.

"It remains a potent weapon against the Philippine army," he said.

The Inquirer contacted the leadership of the military human rights group Karapatan and tried to get its reaction, but no official was around.

Joppie Nantala of the party-list group Mena declined to comment on the military challenge, saying his group was not into "face-finding committee to burst out the truth to the truthless."

"We don't have a clear picture yet. The NPA claimed it was a legitimate attack, but the military claimed it was not," Nantala said.

Eastern Mindanao Commander Col. Eduardo del Rosario lashed at militant groups for not condemning the attack. Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Mayon spews 12,500 tons of sulfur dioxide daily

LEGAZPI CITY—MAYON VOLcano showed a second high sulfur dioxide (SO2) emission rate of 13,548 tons per day and continued lava flow reaching 3.5 km. from the crater's summit, making it just 400 meters from the 6-km. radius permanent danger zone, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology said yesterday.

In its Sunday bulletin, the Phivolcs predicted the lava trail to reach the zone on Tuesday or Wednesday—which might threaten crops cultivated by farmers who live beyond the zone.

Leny Saquilon, science research specialist of Phivolcs-Manila, said the 500 emission rate is a result of magma degassing near the crater.

Eruption

However, he said it was only one of the parameters and was not yet enough basis to indicate a shift from the currently "build and quiet" eruption to "hazardous and explosive."

The Phivolcs yesterday warned villagers living within the shadow of the 2,419-meter Mayon of hazards associated with explosions either from the summit or from the advancing lava flow in the southeast as the volcano's activities appeared to swell.

Subsumption were also reviewing past eruptions to help interpret the ongoing volcanic restiveness, which started on July 14.

Saquilon said the current volcanic activity was seen to be similar to the 1978 "steam-broken eruption" characterized by a quiet emission of lava.

It was also found to be similar to the first phase of the 1984 eruption.

The 3.6-km advancing lava trail, according to Saquilon, has now surpassed the distance recorded during the 2001 eruption, or just a little more than 4 km from the crater. Ephraim Agudo with report from Aubrey Rubien, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Roundup

12-year jail for marijuana

BAGUIO CITY—A court was sentenced to 12 years in prison for marijuana possession in 2003. Regional Trial Court Judge Antonio Reyes also imposed a P300,000 fine on Eulog Mangilim for violating the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002. Police recovered marijuana from Mangilim in Barangay Fagdawan's old home. In a separate case, the court sentenced Mangilim and two men arrested with him—Abdel Hamsary Tan Casilli and Eric Tambunan—to six months of rehabilitation at the Baguio City Treatment and Rehabilitation Center in Tapiang, Baguio City. The three men were also fined P10,000 each for illegal drug or paraphernalia and possession. Norman Cacho and Cordillera

Divine Cabisa, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Bomb threat at GSIS-Albay

LEGAZPI CITY—A phoned-in bomb threat forced some 40 employees of the Government Service Insurance System here to leave their office on Wednesday. An employee, Ms. Isabel Baquial, said a man called the agency's toll free at past 8 a.m. to tell her that "everyone should leave the office because of a bomb that's ready to explode." Police and dogs in civilian clothes searched the premises but found nothing. Ms. Isabel, officer in charge, said this was the third bomb scare in the office.

Gabrielle Apolar, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Mindoro studies center

CITY OF CALAPAN—The Divine Word College of Calapan ended its celebration of its 50th founding anniversary on July 29-30 with the launching of the Center for Mindoro Culture (MC). A repository facility for cultural preservation, development and social transformation. Aside from books, articles, journals, brochures, theses, monographs and other printed materials, and CD discs containing the OMS offers various services on cultural heritage preservation, conservation of natural resources, anthropology, cultural and environmental mapping, and research capability building, disaster making and heritage tours. Fr. Ernesto Mirabite, the university's research and planning officer, said the center was supported by the Philippine Association of Museums Inc. and the Cleric Studies Center On La Salle Universities.

Mafiana Rivas, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Medical aid to evacuees

CEBU CITY—Provincial health workers, together with 20 medical team, have been monitoring some 4,000 families displaced by clashes municipal government entities and Moro rebels in at least four towns of Maguindanao. The monitoring and health activities, that began Tuesday, include medical consultation for evacuees in Mamasapano and Tukuran towns, sites of the recent skirmishes. Dr. Tato Salak, provincial health chief, said the "Americans counterparts" of doctors were helping conduct medical consultations, surgical and dental services, circumcision and immunization among children. Salak said the Americans were also distributed free toothbrushes and school bags to children.

Charlie Saburo, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Taiwanese medical mission

SAN ISIDRO CITY—More than 1,000 poor patients benefited from a medical mission by a team from Taiwan's Christian Chia-Yi Hospital which visited Barangay Esquea in Luisa and Poblacion in Jubian, two of the villages located on the eastern side of Mount Kalatungan, on July 28-29. Dr. Edgar Bartle, provincial health officer, said the team also conducted evangelization as part of their healing mission, donated medical equipment to the provincial hospital, and awarded scholarships to 17 medical students in the Gonzaga Provincial Hospital to share with their hospital in Taiwan.

Bobby Lalata, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Nursing deans, execs seek GMA help vs PRC

BAGUIO CITY—Deans of nursing schools and officers of the Philippine Nurses Association have been asked to help Macapagal-Arroyo to sanction the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) for the alleged cheating in the June 11 and 13 nursing licensure examinations.

In a letter, they asked Ms. Arroyo to suspend the PRC commissioners as well as the members of the Board of Nursing.

They also urged Ms. Arroyo to form a team to investigate alleged test leakage, which the PRC vowed to test anew. Boss of the nursing board before it released the test results on July 19.

They told the President that the report submitted by "PRC's suspiciously swift denial of the anomaly," despite the complaint of 90 of the 500 sample questions drawn up by a nursing board member showed up in an 18-page booklet, written document circulated in the Baguio nursing area.

"It is now very clear that PRC mastermind the plan to investigate as it should likewise be investigated. Aside from its initial efforts to suppress the truth, more allegations of PRC irregularities and anomalies are coming out, like the violation of the security of the confidential rooms where board questions were sidecred," they said in the letter.

"Your profession is one of the largest dollar earners of our country; it does not deserve the blows it sustained from the ill-fated acts of a few of its members who acted in cahoots with government officials. It is our view that the only way we can reverse the effects of the leakage is for your administration to demonstrate unequivocally that it is does not condone the immorality."

They said the request has just "the integrity of the examination and the nursing profession itself has been gravely compromised."

The PNA chapter in the United States also expressed concern over the "unending manner with which the (PRC) handled the problem."

In a manifesto, the group said "the publicity generated by the leakage incident ... and the way the concerned officials have handled may reverse any reputation ... for competence and dependability."

The group said it had launched the campaign for the adoption of the Philippines as a nursing center of the National Council for Licensure Examinations for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN). It said it now found a backlash from the would.

"It has in a stake. The integrity of the nursing profession, the campaign to make the Philippines an NCLEX-RN nursing center, the overseas employment of the thousands of nurses, which the Philippine labor force values most, the growth of the Philippine economy," the group said. Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

HUMANG graduates in the Cordillera keep up protests against the test leakage that rallied the image of the nursing profession in the country. They have turned to President Macapagal-Arroyo for her intervention in punishing those behind the leakage.

NATURAL HABITAT A child feeds herself amid lush vegetation in a garden at a day care center in Milbuga in Bagac, Bataan. The day care center was chosen as a model for others because of the way it teaches children the value of nature.

Hi-tech documentation brings out resilience of lahar town

By Sandra Dorgo
PDI Central Luzon Desk

BACOLOR, PAMPANGA—BURIED and dismembered by Mt. Pinatubo's eruptions and lahar since 1991, this tiny Pampanga town has gone hi-tech in documenting how its residents have been surrounding the disaster and human sufferings, and rebuilding from there.

At the helm of this computer-aided documentation is an American cartologist, Dr. Kathleen D. Bowden.

Cebreroan, 64, and a retired professor at the University of Illinois, used the software ArcGIS (Geographical Information System) to produce a digital map based on hundreds of images that captured the glorious, tortured and tragic years in the town.

The reawakening of the volcano, located 34 km northwest, sent most of its 75,000 residents on an exodus, almost emptying the municipality into a ghost town of the Spanish colonial government, capital of the Philippines during the British Occupation, capital of Pampanga until 1904 and the province's "tobacco."

The photographs were stolen copies shared by residents and volcanologists or taken by Cebreroan in the course of her research with Kapampangan sociologists Cora Liamzon and Gloria Kelson, and marine geologist Rolyn Rodolfo, all assisting the cartographer from Bowen as UNO.

Cebreroan has lived in the town since to do months prior to documenting the rebuilding process.

Among Philippine Government officials hunted by volcanic debris, Bowden is on for the first to use GIS technology according to Rodolfo.

For a start, the map is of Bacolor, capital, Cebreroan says, based on a 19 by cadastral maps. Cebreroan also superimposed the village's old street that had been erased by lahar and flood.

Dots and history

Divided into 14 sections, the map contains more than 500 dots representing the location of residents across the municipality's nine barangays rebuilt on top of 8.5 metres of lahar on the average.

At a click of the mouse, the dot opens to reveal how the families, the town government and the Catholic parishes lost and rebuilt the structures in ruins.

The photographs, arranged in a montage, help one see the extent of the devastation and especially the painstaking efforts and resilience of the residents.

"Every dot in the map represents a story," Cebreroan told researchers in a presentation at the Holy Angel University's Juan B. Miguel Resource Center for Kapampangan Studies recently.

Bible, other made of wood or concrete, were what the residents retained in the rubble of their homes. Car jacks were their only tool to dig their lahar-defying residences after the 1991 eruptions.

After 1995, Kapampangan in the United States sent home emergency hydraulic jacks. Through them, the municipal government gained a house-raising program for more than 2,500 houses. Most of with spent enough to for a brand new studio. The houses looked like birdhouses.

By 1999, the families who refused to leave and chose sites decided to relocate from barangay resettlement sites began building permanent homes on recycled or contemporary materials.

Mayor Bonnie Dungca said not less than 3,000 families have since returned to the town.

Resilience

It's a rebuilding process largely done on local resources. Relying for the Natural Hazards Review in May 2001, Cebreroan observed: "Lacking guidance, resources and other support from the national government, the municipality of Bacolor is unable to design and construct a disaster-resistant community. Informal activities generated in the decisions of individual families and small groups of local citizens explore the comprehensive and participatory planning of that needed at the municipal level."

But in remarks in the town was a tough decision for the residents to make, Cebreroan said.

But one, the national government has sacrificed Bacolor to make the presidential capital, San Fernando, Pro. Invasions of the town's 21 villages were staged by the 56-km PNR Magalihe to be able to map the lahar. Then, the residents have to live right next to a railroad line, unsafely a highway raised on meters high.

"If little of their good will is may not be in town," Cebreroan noted.

A set of photographs captured anger turned point, a wall being a street separated this period: "Magalihe is for Betsaida, Magalihe is Bacolor."

Eventually, the passage was lost as lahar, coming in yearly cycles, changed what was left of the wall.

The documentation project, Cebreroan said, would hope to cover the neighboring villages of Cabalantian and Cabetuan. Study patterns and history may be added to layers in the map, she said.

She said there's so much to see in the map for more only a truth of a big cache of photographs has been attached. In time, the map would be put on the Internet. For the time being, it is being made available to the people of Bacolor.

The paper—"Living with Lahars: Opportunities from Recurrent Loss of Natural Hazard Mitigation Structures on the Pasig-Potrero River" and "Can This Town Survive? Case Study of a Buried Philippine Town"—tell a story of how families members are rising from the disaster and times. Cebreroan said, could provide tips to communities living near angry mountains.

There are 22 active volcanoes in the Philippines.

The Bacolor government has told the town's story on the web through www.bacolor.gov.ph.

The Center for Kapampangan Studies donated one issue of its publication "Sinupan" on Bacolor's glory, down to a time it was not on nowhere, on its website.

What a story, Cebreroan said, is that Bacolor has not been buried nor been memory, as many buried towns had.

BACOLOR was resilient to 1991 volcano effects to make the town inhabitable again were done by the close documentation of its residents. A bulldozer pushes lahar deposits to the side at the Pasig-Potrero River in Bacolor in this 1995 photo.

Anti-impeach vote kiss of death, warns fishermen's group

LEGAZPI CITY—A LEFTIST SAlinewide coalition of fishermen's groups warned pro-administration congressmen that crashing more the second impeachment move against President Macapagal-Arroyo would mean the end of their political careers.

"President Arroyo's push barrel offensive will not save their grossly clouded political careers as anti-impeachment voters in a Luis Tiu Radio, a radio-led producer Gerry Albert Corpuz, spokesperson of Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (Pamalakaya), said in a statement.

Corpuz said his group was announcing the opposition of such assignments on the second impeachment case against Mr. Arroyo.

Pamalakaya issued the warning after House Majority Floor leader Prospero Bengzon announced that the removal of the second impeachment case would be better than the one lodged last year.

Corpuz also cited reports that Representatives Monico Puentevella of Bacolod City and Isidro Real of Zamboanga del Sur had both claimed that the pro-administration majority had already reached a consensus to junk the second impeachment case.

He linked back at the three lawmakers allies, accusing them of plotting to murder the second complaint.

He warned them of being crossed with pork barrel and other political puzzles that Malacañang would readily dispense such as rewards for the killing of the impeachment case.

The complaint accuses Mr. Arroyo of culpable violation of the 1987 Constitution, graft and corruption, bribery and other high crimes, and betrayal of public trust.

Corpuz said a resolution by the House can be kept to evaluate such impeachment.

"Those who would conspire such blunderings to shove down the impeachment case will automatically be included in the expose list for the 2007 national elections," he said.

He added that his group would launch a campaign against the incumbent congressmen in the second impeachment case against Mr. Arroyo.

With six of the seven impeachment complaints filed against Mr. Arroyo already referred by Speaker Jose de Venecia to the House committee on justice, another complaint was filed by the Black and White movement.

Brigade the barrage of impeachment complaints filed against the President, Malacañang warned unheard.

Mr. ROGER'S lawyer, Romulo Macalintal, has reportedly disclosed that they had neither formed a legal team nor studied the new charges against her, saying it would just be a "waste of time." *Bella I. Madrid Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Heirs to settle Buddha case out of court

By Dolmar Cudia
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—THE HEIRS OF Bolodoc Buddha Image Rogelio Beras will get up to seven inches in height with the bronze-plated Buddha statue in court custody serving as the main attraction.

Heirs Beras, Rogelio's eldest son, said the plan to build a museum could be the best possible solution to settle the custody issue surrounding the controversial find, believed to be a replica of the original Golden Buddha mined from Rogelio in 1971.

However, Henry, 59, said the belief latest move should not be interpreted that they had decided to abandon their claim that the historic Ferdinand Marcos took from their father the real Golden Buddha statue 35 years ago.

"We know that the statue is ours but as what except for its metal content but the Bersa-Pulidos wanted to get it for the same to end the issue on who should keep it home," said Rogelio's heirs' lawyer.

Atala recently informed Judge Fernando M. Pamintuan, the judge handling the custody fight, that Rogelio's heirs had agreed to enter into an unexploited settlement over the Buddha statue's ownership before the Iglot Buddha.

Under court rules, an extrajudicial settlement must find the Bersa heirs would have to come up with an out-of-court agreement on how to divide Rogelio's property, if he had any left, and decide on who would own the statue.

HEIRS' Beras, son of treasure hunter Gerry Beras and Albert (dead), Gerry's partner, agree anointed the late Bongabon Ferdinand Marcos of stealing the Golden Buddha from them.

The agreement will have to be submitted to the court for approval before the statue will be ordered released.

Atala said the court could no longer conduct further hearings on the case since the custody issue had already been decided in 1996.

He was referring to the decision of Judge Antonio Reyes which directed that the heirs to send custody for one-half of Rogelio's estate and

Jose Beras, the eldest brother of Rogelio, did not express objections to his nephews' decision to include him from the settlement.

Jose, 74, a key maker in Olongapo City, angered his nephews when he testified in court that his brother Rogelio buried to Golden Buddha other than the one kept by the court.

"I really wanted to get the statue but the case is taking too long and I am already old. If the court will not give it to me, it's all right," he said.

Jose insisted the controversy when he asked the court in 1995 to release the statue to him as a member of the barkat's executive board and co-filer.

His request, however, was opposed by Rogelio's children, Henry and his brother Gerry, the Treasure Hunters Association of the Philippines Inc. (Thapi), and the Office of the Solicitor General.

The OSG and Thapi have yet to comment on the latest decision.

Married to co-heirs of Henry and Gerry were their brother Hermie and Rogelio's children by his second wife Rosario—Rowena, Rosa, Rolly Jeanne, Johanna and Sunrisa.

Ex-PNP chief offers self for gov't post

MANGALDAN, PANGASINAN—After 22 days of catching up on sleep and having enough time to read, watch movies and "just sit and unwind," former Philippine National Police chief Arturo Lomibao said he was eyeing re-entering government service.

"I am available for any position which the President (Macapagal-Arroyo) deems I am competent enough to accept. If she needs me, I'm all for my services," Lomibao said when reporters here on Thursday.

Lomibao, a native of this town, said he can go to retirement and his return to government service would depend on the President.

Before he retired on July 5, talks were rife that Lomibao would be appointed director of the National Bureau of Investigation.

He clarified that he was not offered the position.

"To tell you the truth, the NBI [Investigation] was not offered to me. There were just speculations, maybe because three days ago my predecessor director yet. Who should I reject a government position [when] it is an opportunity to serve again," he said.

Lomibao spent 10 years in government service. "During my government [of 36 yrs] service... parang iyon na lang ang akin [only tribute I'll receive is the only job I can handle]."

He said he is also "open" to election positions.

Reports circulating in Pangasinan said Lomibao would run for governor in 2007. He said he is "no opinion."

But he said he could not decide yet on what direction to take because "it would depend on the conditions on the ground." *Belinda Sotelo-Fuentes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

P500M sought to move out OFWs

From page A1

subsequently released after the government withdrew its small military contingent from the area, straining relations with the United States.

"The appropriate policy response here is a comprehensive and concise repatriation just like what the other countries are doing," he added.

The proposal will be submitted tomorrow," he said. "Not a single drop of Filipino blood is worth those decimated Lebanese."

Aside from the money being sought from Congress, the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration board of trustees will approve this week the release of the full P500-million standby fund for the repatriation operations.

This means that Osmeña would be releasing another P300 million to add to the P200 million that it had reportedly already spent to ferry Filipinos from the television sites in the Middle East to the Philippines.

Owwa overhead cost

The P500-million fund is almost equal to the combined of Owwa which was pegged at P547 million for the whole of last year, according to allowances of its foreign affairs deployed overseas.

Foreign Undersecretary Esteban Conejos Jr. said the public should not be alarmed over the lack of funds because the last that his job heard was that it is "illegal to deposit" in the past few days Lebanese is more than a dozen flights he had scheduled for the return of OFWs) should prove that the government was spending heavily for the relief.

Conejos continued that the Philippine Embassy in Beirut had $250,000 in its account when the fighting broke out and this was replenished by the DFA with a $150,000 infusion last last month.

He said the money had spent roughly $120,000 so far the executive effort that went largely to purchasing food for the OFWs taking shelter at the Catholic church in Beirut, hiring buses to transport them from southern Lebanon to Beirut and Damascus, and paying for their entry and transit visa to Syria.

Division of responsibility

Conejos clarified that all of those funds came from the OFW Assistance Fund and not from Owwa, the team had agreed to divide the responsibility from the start between the DFA and the Department of Labor and Employment.

The Department of Foreign Affairs yesterday said the 123-funded Organization for International Migration had been helping in the Filipino repatriation effort from southern Lebanon in response to a Philippine request. (Download story on this page.)

Owwa Administrator Marianito Roque explained that his agency was not obligated to finance the operations of any Philippine Embassy and that its funds were forwarded to its finance officers in each country for disbursement to the proper authorities, specifically the DOLE.

Owwa investments

Roque said the Owwa funds were used to maintain the temporary shelter for OFWs in Damascus, beds and pay for both theirmeal and commercial flights of OFWs back to Manila, pay for the halfway house they would stay in upon arrival, purchase their domestic plane or boat tickets for their trip to their respective home provinces, and sponsor the reintegration process that would allow the returnee to get jobs in other countries or in the Philippines.

Roque noted the Owwa had P7.6 billion in total funds (mained from the $25 deducted from each OFW account that were invested in high-yielding securities and government bonds with the Development Bank of the Philippines and Land Bank of the Philippines.

Conejos said the team had decided to take a calibrated approach in the repatriation of OFWs in order to prevent unnecessary panic.

He said the government had to avoid the scenario in each time Israel's attacks had unsettled the banking system and forced the Lebanese central bank to tighten the outflow of dollars.

Jalosjos, chair of the House appropriations committee, said that the House would try to pass next week the P500-million supplemental budget so that all the OFWs could be brought back home from Lebanon.

"That would be around $1,000 for each OFW. It's very clear that the money would already be one of them," he said.

8 million OFWs

Jalosjos said it was only right that Congress appropriated funds for the repatriation of OFWs in Lebanon since the P8 billion in Owwa funds were relief specific, not just by OFWs in Lebanon, but by all 8 million Filipinos working around the world.

"It is time for a grateful people to repay them, especially those in distress," Jalosjos said.

"The Owwa funds are abundant and (exist but they belong to the 8 million OFWs. They are meant to sustain their regular needs, not their extraordinary requirements," he added.

Palace officials snub probe

From page A1

has adopted a piece-meal approach, lesbian because of lack of policy, lack of funds? These are the questions we have to answer," Tolentino said.

Senate not specified

Hours earlier, Estrella sent a letter to Estrada saying that he and other department heads would not attend because the invitation did not refer to a "possible invited manner" that prompted the hearing and did not contain questions.

The executive secretary said he and the other officials would be unable to attend the hearing until this information was furnished them and sufficient time given to prepare for the hearing.

Estrada said "all of the government officials invited to the inquiry are currently engaged in official operations to get our OFWs in Lebanon out of harm's way" and they should be allowed to do their jobs.

The no-shows included Labor Secretary Arturo Brion, Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya Jr., Foreign Undersecretary Rafael Consejo Jr., Undersecretary Al-Hadji Abdullah Dumama, Philippine Overseas Employment Administrator Rosalinda Baldoz, Overseas Workers Welfare Administrator Marianito Roque and Ambassador to Israel Antonio Modena.

Estrada said the order by the government officials did not help their cases in explaining the alleged misuse of Owwa funds in the past, including the transfer of some P536.082 million from the Owwa Medicare Fund to the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. in 2003 as the President's orders.

Cannot be explained

"By not attending this committee hearing, we have reached the conclusion that the funds from Owwa cannot be explained," he said.

Bichara said the embassy, which was close in using up to $200,000 fund, was in dire need of a separate, bigger standby fund to respond to at least half of the 40,000 workers from Lebanon to Syria's border.

The embassy spends $1 a day for the meals of one evacuee, $30 to transport him by bus to Syria's border, and another $150 to pay for his entry visa. In fact, it has transported 1,761 workers to Syria, he said.

"There's now a ceasefire for 48 hours in south Lebanon. And after that, they will continue (the evacuation), and we need only to have what's going to happen now," he said.

Since last week, no money has been sent to the embassy, Bichara said. "Negative," he said, in answer to Sen. Juliet Arroyo's question. But Bichara said he was informed by his finance officer that some $150,000 was ready for pick-up in Damascus to replenish the embassy funds.

They're hiding something

The ambassador said Owwa sent $150,000 to the "personal account" of its welfare officer in Beirut, Mario Antonio, but not to the embassy, and shouldered "running" of the evacuees in Syria.

Asked what the main reason, Senate President Manuel Villar Jr. said "if you don't appear, you're hiding something."

Villar agreed that the mob was a "contribution of 911 style" in the hearings, referring to the gap under that President Macapagal-Arroyo issued last year which the Supreme Court has declared illegal. The court threw out an appeal on 6-5-4-4 last month.

"I hope that they would not run this in the light because otherwise, it would destroy the system. I still don't understand why they had to skip the hearing. It was too small an issue that it's not likely Estrada or even the President would be involved."

Sen. Franklin Drilon scoffed at Estrada's claim that the inquiry was not in aid of legislation, pointing out that the hearing concerned a review or a possible amendment of the Migrant Workers Act, particularly on which agency had primary responsibility over it.

"Contrary to the statement of the executive secretary, there is really a need to look at these laws," he said.

Brion's explanation

In a statement, Brion said at least $1.3 million (P77.24 million) provided by Owwa "has already been used" in evacuating the workers beginning July 21.

The secretary, who chairs the Owwa Board of Trustees, said the amount represented more than 17.5 percent of the $4 million allocated by the agency for the evacuation and transitional expenses.

Brion said the agency had brought home 1,344 overseas Filipinos) workers from Lebanon, including those who were scheduled to arrive in Manila last night.

Roque earlier told reporters that the government was spending an average of $1,000 (P57,200) per evacuated OFW. The latest figures given by Brion translated to $1,116 (about P63,806) per evacuee.

The labor secretary said the amount was used mainly to pay for the bus and plane fares of the OFWs from the evacuation site in Lebanon to their arrival in Manila.

IOM help

But Gilbert Sanpar, spokesperson of the Department of Foreign Affairs, told the Inquirer in last night that the UN-funded International Organization for Migration (IOM) paid for the bus trips out of Beirut to Syria and other incidental expenses such as food.

He also said that the IOM was paying for the repatriation of 1,760 OFWs aboard three flights) 74% beginning Wednesday, following the Philippine request for assistance.

Brion also said that the Owwa's more than P8 billion in funds generated by the contributions of Owwa members was being "spent judiciously to ensure the sustainability of the fund and the continued provision of programs and services to the OFWs and their dependents." With a report from Nikko Dizon, Jerome Aning and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

OPPOSITION Sen. Jinggoy Estrada seems to be looking for answers in the ceiling after top government officials snubbed yesterday's Senate hearing. INQUIRER/GREG CASTRO

Palace keeps Bichara as envoy

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

DESPITE HIS APPARENT INsubordination, Malacañang is keeping Philippine Ambassador to Lebanon Al Francis Bichara as head of the crisis team overseeing the evacuation of Filipinos from the war-torn country.

This was revealed yesterday by Foreign Undersecretary for Migrant Workers Affairs Esteban Conejos Jr. who said the government had nothing to apologize for in the way it is handling Filipino home despite criticisms the effort was ill-funded and badly orchestrated.

"I will not apologize for this, we have done the best we can. We are under wartime conditions. Sometimes, we can't even the plan. Under the circumstances, we have provided well for the safety and comfort of our OFWs under extreme wartime conditions," said Conejos.

Advisers also deployed

"No matter what help we give them, we have to make allowances for weaknesses and difficulties not just for our OFWs but for the Lebanese and others. I'm not just here," Conejos said Bichara would continue to be the "commander" of the crisis team even though Presidential Middle East Preparedness Team head Roy Cimatu and Philippine Ambassador to Kuwait Ricardo Endaya had been deployed by Malacañang to the area.

"The commander on the ground is Ambassador Bichara, like a commander of war he has control of the people. Sir, Ambassador Cimatu are there only to advise the chief of mission," said Conejos.

However, Conejos said this did not preclude the Department of Foreign Affairs communicate from setting up Bichara's deputy in Cyprus, although he would not go as far as to relieve Bichara of ambassadorial duties.

"That is for the committee to decide," he said.

Filipino math trainer chosen Erdos Awardee

From page A1

Elementary students trained by China's Mathematics Trainers' World Philippines (MTG) bagged ten silver medals and seven bronze medals.

Chua himself was awarded by the World Federation of National Mathematics Competition (WFNMC) at the Federation College in Cambridge, England, during its 2006 conference on July 23-28.

He was conferred the much-coveted Paul Erdos Award.

The award, named after renowned Hungarian mathematician Erdos (pronounced air-dosh), was "established to recognize contributions of mathematicians which have played a significant role in the development of mathematical challenges for gifted students" and which have been a stimulus for the enrichment of mathematics learning," says the award's website.

Chua, who was born in the Philippines to Chinese parents, is the first Filipino to receive the prestigious award.

"I live the Philippines," Chua told reporters upon arriving in Manila on Sunday night from the United Kingdom.

Principal

He said he had received offers to study and work overseas but he realized he wanted to stay in the country and continue honing the talents of Filipino math whizkids.

Over the past six years, he has served as the principal of the

CHUA with mom carmen Paul Erdos Award.

Xavierscape Chong Hua High School.

In 1995, he founded, along with three colleagues, the MTG Philippines.

The league training young students for international math competitions.

He has served as its president since the MTG's inception, with coleander Richelda Villarin, as its executive vice president.

The two also established Team Pilipinas to compete in the United States in 2007.

Duntay the training, students are made to join international correspondence competitions in the United States and Canada.

From the initial 6,000 to 7,000 students, the number is further trimmed in the top 1 percent for a more rigid four-day in-house training that would prepare them for the bigger international competitions, according to Chua.

Chua has devoted three decades to teaching Math, much like Erdos himself.

Married to Math

At 53, he doesn't have his own family. "I was married to Math," Chua said.

He said he was lucky to be the youngest of his parents' five children. As (he) allowed him to pursue true love.

"If I were the eldest, they would have made me enter a business," Chua said.

A BS Math graduate of Ateneo University in Sta. Cruz, Manila, Chua said that through the years that he taught Math to students from elementary to college, he learned that a young person's gift for math could always be honed.

"Of course, the interest should always be there," he said.

Most students' aversion to Math is accompanied by some other subject's false premise that it is a genius interest to the subjects.

"You can teach Math using games and puzzles to make it more enjoyable and less intimidating to children," he said.

Chua himself discovered his love for Math when he was in high school and had a "very good" Math teacher.

"I told myself that I wanted to be as good a teacher as him," he said.

Female contestants

Many female students are good in Math in the Philippines, Chua said. He noted that the MTG produced its first competition winner in 1998 in Cristina Uy, who received a gold medal in a Math contest in Hong Kong.

"During my presentation in the INTERNET, many were shocked to see that many of our contestants were girls," he said.

Still and all, Chua said there were more boys who were interested in Math.

The MTG passionately trains Filipino students because "we want our country to be good in math (and) because the global importance is that Filipinos still have a little brain with math," he said.

Chua noted that the Philippines had consistently ranked last in the World Bank's International Math and Science Survey.

"We want to help change that image," he said.

IN THE KNOW

Who is Paul Erdos?

BORN ON MARCH 26, 1913, into a Hungarian Jewish family in Budapest, his life revolved around mathematics, for only numerous times childhood. At the age of 3, he amazed guests by multiplying three-digit numbers in his head, and he discovered negative numbers by himself the same year.

The most prolific mathematician of his generation, Erdos wrote or co-authored 1,000 papers, self-publishing one a week even in his seventies. He frequently crossed many areas, but he was considered a genius in number theory.

Erdos made his first significant contribution to number theory at 20, when he discovered an elegant proof for the theorem which states that for each number greater than 1, there is always at least one prime number between it and its double.

Having collaborated with several mathematicians, the phenomenon of the "Erdos number" developed. Mathematicians liked bragging about how close connection Erdos is. To have an Erdos number 1 means the mathematician must have published a paper with Erdos; to have an Erdos number 2 meant he or she must have published with someone who had published with Erdos, etc.

Erdos died of a heart attack while working on an equation on Sept. 20, 1996, at the age of 83. PDI Research

NEWS

Congress gives up on P1-T budget

Solon says bicam a 'waste of time'

By Michael Lim Ubac

IT LOOKS LIKE PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo will not be signing the country's first trillion-peso budget this year.

Rep. Jose Sabiada, House appropriations committee chair, yesterday filed a bill seeking a P46.4-billion supplemental budget, saying the measure had "abandoned the 2006 General Appropriations Act" in favor of a supplemental budget which "offers a more workable template." (See related story below)

SALCEDA

DRILON

Dead in the water

The General Appropriations Act, or the P1.853-trillion proposed national budget for 2006, was dead in the water after the bicameral conference committee failed to hammer out a compromise on the provisions in June.

The Senate had voted to slash P64 billion from the outlay, a move that was opposed by the House and Malacañang, as it cut into President Arroyo's pet programs for local officials.

Yesterday, Sabiada in an interview described the bicameral conference committee as a "waste of time."

'We're game'

"To paraphrase the frame of the Nation Address, if the Senate wants to pick old fights over the budget, we're game," he said, quoting President Arroyo's last State.

House Bill No. 5604 would cover the funding gaps between the executive 2005 budget, under which the government is now operating, and the failed 2006 appropriations act, he said.

Supplemental budget

"The passage of a supplemental budget for the government is imperative to provide authority for expenditures that are not in the reenacted budget but are mandatory by virtue of a law or necessary for the welfare of our public servants, and for the improvement of public service," Sabiada wrote in the bill's explanatory note.

The bill would allow the corresponding teams to augment their respective in the following agencies that would otherwise have to live within their reenacted 2005 budget:

P8.5B more DepEd

Department of Agriculture, P4.09 billion; Department of Education, P8.5056 billion; Department of Interior and Local Government, P1.42 billion; Department of Social Welfare and Development, P509 million; Department of Transportation and Communications, P1.24 billion;

Commission on Elections, P1.16 billion; miscellaneous and personal benefits, P4.92 billion; local government units (LGUs), P1.62 billion; Armed Forces retirees and veterans' pensions and gratuity, P4.06 billion; and another allocation for LGUs representing their internal revenue allotments (IRAs), P1.6.86 billion.

'Pork barrel'

Part of the P64 billion the Senate slashed from the P1.202-trillion proposed budget was money intended for LGUs. These were the combined 39-bill, Ito Salapuan and Glue Ammo funds, cut by the senators in the belief that was a "pork barrel" to discredit local executives.

Sabiada said the P1.852 billion allocation for LGUs in the supplemental budget represented the "incremental special shares of LGUs in the national wealth and for the premium subsidy for budgets under the national health insurance program, while the P.4.06 billion is considered a retirement fully appropriated every year."

Sabiada said the P46.4 billion supplemental outlay "covers mandatory, non-postponable and nonconventional expenditures," adding that it was only a third of the P138 billion "spending authorization but due to circumstances."

WATERWORLD

This family of four on a makeshift boat made of styrofoam is still smiling amid the gloom brought by another storm. Tropical depression "Henry" brought heavy rains in Metro Manila, leaving many parts of town capable under water.

Reenacting '05 budget not a bad idea–Drilon

By TJ Burgonio

SEN. FRANKLIN DRILON SAYS KEEN ON recovering the suspended bicameral conference on the proposed 2006 national budget, saying there were barely five months to go in the year and that President Macapagal-Arroyo would preferred the passage of a supplemental budget.

Drilon, who was nominated last night to chair of the finance committee, said yesterday it was absurd to pass the 2006 trillion-peso proposed budget, which was larger than the 2005 56-billion 2005 budget, with fewer than five months to go before the year ended.

"I don't think it will do us good to reconvene the bicam. We have barely five months to go. And the President made a clear signal in her [sona. She said she will submit a supplemental budget," he said at a press forum.

Some senators had hoped that the bicameral talks on the budget, which bogged down in early June over the P64 billion cuts made by the Senate, would be restored during the third regular session of the 12th Congress.

Drilon also said that reenacting the 2005 budget for the rest of the year wasn't a "bad idea" because the government would incur a lower deficit were it to enact the larger 2006 budget.

"The projected deficit is P44 billion, which is not exactly bad because as long as we are operating on our deficit, our national debt will increase on a yearly basis. We need to fund the deficit through borrowings, both domestic and foreign, and in 2006, it is projected that the interest payments would hit P340 billion," he said.

If the 2006 budget were passed, the projected deficit was P128 billion, he said.

Drilon, who was also nominated to fill the chair of the committee on public order, said he favored the passage of the proposed P46-billion supplemental budget if only to fund the P15-billion internal revenue allotment of the local governments and the P1.8-billion automation of elections.

"I'm in favor of a supplemental budget so we can provide for the mandatory requirement," he said.

Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya said that Malacañang had submitted to Congress a supplemental outlay of P46.426 billion to compensate for the losses incurred from the failure to pass the 2006 budget.

The fresh allocations, he said, would cover that spendings for major agencies like the Department of Education, the Department of Agriculture Reform and the Department of Interior and Local Government were kept at the denied 2006 levels.

In her State of the Nation Address the previous Monday, the President pushed for the passage of a supplemental budget to cover the internal revenue allotment, the local government units' share in national government revenues and the automation of elections.

Senators were divided on the issue.

Senate President Manuel Villar Jr., Drilon and Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said they favored pushing a supplemental budget.

Senators Juan Arroyo and Sen. Ralph Recto, chair of the committee on ways and means, opposed the move, saying allocations in the supplemental budget were already covered by the 2006 budget and that Congress might run up debasing the supplemental budget measure, the 2006 budget and the 2007 budget at the same time.

Census cancelled due to budget woes

BUDGET WOES HAVE FORCED THE GOVernment to cancel a 2006 population census, which would have been the first in 10 years, the National Statistics Office said yesterday.

Congress's failure to pass the 2006 national budget has led to the "unavailability of funds to implement the preparatory activities that should have been started by now like the recruitment of data collectors and supervisors," the NSO said.

Such delays could "compromise the quality of the data," it said in a statement.

There would also be some basic funding for the other related tasks such as training the census takers and processing of results, it added.

A law mandates the government to conduct a nationwide population census every 10 years.

The Philippines has an estimated population of 83 million.

Disagreements between President Macapagal-Arroyo and budget czars proposed by the Senate have forced the government to operate on budget levels set for 2005. AFP

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Acting Makati police chief demoted

Napolcom affirms rank downgrade for dishonesty

By Tarra V. Quismundo

ALMOST TWO WEEKS AFTER HE WAS appointed acting Makati police chief, Supt. Felipe Napoles Jr. was demoted by one rank for gross dishonesty by the National Police Commission (Napolcom).

He demoted him from superintendent to chief inspector. The equivalent of a major in the military was announced in a statement by the Napolcom secretariat.

The commission said it had merely affirmed the decision of then Philippine National Police chief Leandro Mendoza on July 19, 2006 ordering Napoles' demotion as result of his "unauthorized possession of a stolen vehicle."

Based on Napolcom records, the police official was charged with grave misconduct more than seven years ago when he was still assigned to the Cotabato Route Police Provincial Office.

Napoles, the police chief in the town of Datu Odin Sinsuat in the province of Maguindanao, was charged after he failed to return a stolen Mitsubishi L-300 van (GBD 309) on Jan. 25, 1999, a vehicle recovered by the Logistic-based Provincial Traffic Management Office (PTMO). The administrative complaint was filed by seven PTMO officers.

The Napolcom said Napoles used the van for personal purposes, even registering the vehicle under his name, in violation of the gun ban and had altered the vehicle's engine and "defaced" and filed the vehicle's chassis had two serial numbers.

One of the chassis numbers was traced to the vehicle's original owner, the Sino Pinch Industries company based in Manila which had reported the vehicle as missing.

Following the inspection, the vehicle was impounded and Napoles was apprehended, the commission said in a statement.

In his defense, Napoles said the motor of his possession of the stolen vehicle was "legal from the very beginning" as he claimed that he had surrendered the vehicle upon getting a clearance from the regional Traffic Management Command. He also presented several receipts to show that he bought the vehicle's engine and chassis before he registered the vehicle with the Land Transportation Office.

However, the National Appellate Board (NAB), which heard Napoles' appeal, ruled that the "evidence on record clearly shows the respondent's act of dishonesty and puts his character in serious doubt. It added that the official's "objectionable behavior ... should not be tolerated considering that he is a police officer who is a law enforcer."

RAINY DAYS FOR KIDS
Soaking wet and barely able to keep his eyes open in the pouring rain, a baby (top) clings to his mother as she asks for alms during a heavy downpour in Makati City. Two older boys (left), however, have a blast as they play in floodwaters at the Tenement Bridge in Marikina while other kids take a ride on a jeep crossing the bridge. INKY DAVID, ALCINDOR

Life terms for 7 men accused in kidnap case

By Jocelyn R. Uy

SEVEN MEN WILL BE SPENDING THE rest of their lives behind bars after a lone witness found them guilty yesterday of kidnapping a Chinese-Filipino woman and her coworker two years ago.

Those sentenced to life imprisonment were Marlowe Abacis, Bonifer Igbo-is, Reynaldo Bala, Simeon Ramel, Rudy Estrogalinog, Isnaly Sa-mimal and Reynaldo Badilla.

Judge Bonifacio Issa Macoda of the Lo Piñas Regional Trial Court Branch 255 found the seven men guilty beyond reasonable doubt of kidnapping Josephine Chua and her driver.

He also ordered them to pay the victims P500,000 each.

Chua and Dalling were employees of a steel company in Las Piñas. Chua is the sister of the owner of the steel firm.

Court records showed that the two women were on their way to the company warehouse on June 24, 2004 when a white Mitsubishi L-300 van blocked their path on Cayetano Street in Pamplona Park Subdivision.

Armed men, who identified themselves as police officers, forced the victims into the van and sped off toward Alabang.

The two were taken to a safehouse on Burgos Street, Purok Ilaglag, Bigaa in Cabuyao, Laguna.

The captors later demanded P5 million in ransom from the victims' families.

The two women, however, were rescued after policemen arrested Badilla, the group's leader.

He provided information that led to the arrest of the other suspects the next day, July 15, at around 5 a.m. The rescue operation was carried out by agents of the National Anti-Kidnapping Task Force led by Angelo Reyes and the Las Piñas police.

Kidnapping and threatened were grounding the victims when they were arrested.

Antiterrorism crusader Tessano Ang Sec told the Inquirer yesterday that some of those convicted were also involved in the kidnapping of other Chinese-Filipino victims like Cora Cole executive Betty Ig Gigi Ty and Carrie Chua.

"It's quite encouraging to see the justice system work despite the threat. Judge Macoda must be commended for the fine work in this case," she said.

Marikina's small entrepreneurs learn ABCs of microfinance

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

THE IT HARD TO COME UP WITH funds to start a small business? A large bank is encouraging residents in Metro Manila to try microfinance.

Banks require collaterals. Microentrepreneurs usually don't.

Metrobank lenders drop by regularly to collect payments but charge every customer zero. Microfinance institutions also rent communities and groups of lenders regularly but charge only up to 15 percent interest.

Plus, borrowers can get ideas for possible small businesses they can engage in.

Take for example, Alfa Philippines, which has several branches all over the country. It started operating in Marikina City just more than a year ago, according to Ailing Deutch manager Pilo Gillera Jr.

He said they now have at least 965 borrowers in Marikina, already close to their initial target of having 1,200 members in the city.

To get a loan—usually between P2,000 and P6,000—one has to be part of a group of eight to 30 borrowers based in the community. This is to ensure efficient collection as the company gathers the group to collect partial payments once a week.

"We also give them lectures on livelihood programs during the weekly meetings," Gillera said.

Organizing borrowers into groups also makes collection more efficient since group members can monitor the payments of their comembers.

There have been instances when some borrowers left the barangay to elude payment but Gillera said they still managed to track them down because of strong community participation in their other branches.

"This microfinance is a poverty alleviation and social-equalization program," entrepreneurship professor Andy Ferrin is said in a gathering of about 200 residents in Marikina City recently.

The gathering was organized by HSBC Bank, which launched its Microfinance Caravan in Marikina City. The caravan aims to educate people about microfinance in at least five more cities and towns, public affairs officer Cel Montes said.

For a change, a large company is not asking people to borrow from the bank, but rather from microfinance institutions like Alfa Philippines, which have operated in the city.

"I'll announce like HSBC not to prosper in the long term, we must address the issue of poverty and find ways to work with other institutions and governments [with] social responsibility," HSBC Philippines chief executive officer Pioneer Manning said in a statement.

The bank official said microfinance has become successful in several countries like India, where microfinance is provided to "over 70,000 poor households including rural and urban areas."

Apart from organizing programs to educate people on the benefits of microfinance, the bank also aims to assist borrowers by providing loans to facilitate trade as well.

The residents who joined the caravan listened to a lecture on entrepreneurship by Ferrin. They also got to ask questions from representatives of microfinance institutions during an open forum.

The sessions also learned from the stories of people who had started their own businesses through microfinancing.

"Microfinance has really helped me expand my business," Dolores Dionisio, 55, said.

She first borrowed P4,000 from the Center for Community Transformation Cavite Cooperative. Now in her seventy, she began making pulotan to sell to schools in Quezon City.

She is now preparing to venture into another business after borrowing P10,000 from the cooperative.

Sugay aide, barangay chairman could face charges

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THE LAWYER REPRESENTING the family of slain Leite, the purported driver who was allegedly shot to death by Mali Sugay, a special assistant of Manila Mayor Jim Atienza, yesterday asked the Department of Justice (DOJ) to include in the charge sheet Sugay's bodyguard and the chair of the barangay where the incident occurred.

Pilliana Mesjain, counsel of the victim's family, told National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) National Capital Region chief Issac Lamela that barangay chair Tessy Ferrer was about to intervene in the heated argument between Leite and Sugay but refrained from doing so.

Mesjain said he has requested the filing of obstruction of duty charges against Ferrer.

The lawyer added that Sugay's bodyguard, whom he did not identify, should be included as an accomplice or principal after being allegedly ordered him to run after Alexander, the victim's brother, who witnessed the incident.

Sugay was formally charged with murder, two counts of frustrated and illegal discharge of firearms before the DOJ last July 17.

A two-month suspension order was also imposed on him by Atienza "to ensure impartiality in the investigation."

Under the law, Atienza said, he could not impose a suspension of more than 60 days.

However, he said he could order Sugay's reinstatement "if the investigation shows the evidence is clearly against him."

Magbitin added that they had also requested that a subpoena be issued against personnel of the Manila City Hall records section to compel them to produce Sugay's employment records to confirm his real name and address.

The lawyer said that they had asked that Sugay's true name be amended from "Mali" to "Jose Maria" and his address from Manila City Hall to Bohol Living, the mayor.

Main job

Sugay, whose job at the City Hall is not mainly to receive complaints against barangay officials, policemen and city employees, has been working at the Office of the Mayor since 1998 and is one of Atienza's 20 special assistants.

The suspect was tagged by witnesses, including the victim's mother, brother and 9-year-old nephew, as the one who shot Leite, 27, at Good Street, Tondo over a petty parking dispute.

Leite's elder brother, Alexander, told authorities that Sugay also threatened to shoot him and his mother. Results videos the incident took place on June 12.

SHELTER FROM THE RAIN
Temporarily out of business due to the strong rains and floods in most areas of the metropolis, the drivers of these barangay tricycles (above) convert their vehicles into shelters from the heavy downpour. (ANTHONY ALVAR)

Review sought for Camanava dike project design

In The Know

THE P5.052-BILLION Camanava flood control project aims to end the perennial problem of floodingin residents Metro Manila. The involves the construction of new walls, dikes, floodgates and pumping stations, covering 38.48-sq.km.

Initially, in 2000, the government targeted finishing its Malabon-based 8,000 infrastructure-heavy project within the project's eight-year. However, the effort began in June 2002 to meet the original completion date of May 31 the after. Retrofitting also delayed the project's finish beyond its as of May 2006, the completion date was changed to June 30, 2007.

The project, however, has not been continuously in operation. Two appeals preliminary injunctions temporarily stopped the project in 2003 by Dr. Jovencio Cinco and Dr. Junior Rodulfo—those cases paved the business of design of the project, saying this would endanger the supposedly 800,000 people living in the area. *Cyrel C. Almodovar, PDI Research*

By Terry V Quiaraman

GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WILL MEET THIS week to assess the P3.4-billion dike project for the flood-prone Camanava (Caloocan, Malabon, Navotas and Valenzuela) area, Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) Chair Bayani Fernando said yesterday.

Expected to carry out the technical evaluation meeting are representatives of the DBMs, the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), project contractors and the mayors in the Camanava area.

"We will review the design with the stakeholders, mayors, the project team, all those involved in the project and we will make an evaluation of what has been done and the observations so far," Fernando said.

He added that 10 percent of the project—which was supported to be finished by next year—has already been completed.

But adjustments in the design would be made following an evaluation of the project to see if alterations would be necessary.

On schedule

"The project is on schedule, as reported. We will see if there will be a need for design changes. That's why we are having this technical assessment. We will see if after the assessment, a (project) would warrant a redesign," Fernando said in a phone interview.

Flooding has been a perennial problem for residents in Camanava.

Several barangays in the area were severely submerged in neck-deep floods because of rains brought by typhoon "Glenda."

Rock band drummer files ₱1M libel suit vs musician

By DJ Yap

THE DRUMMER FOR THE ROCK BAND Gazebo has filed a P1-million libel suit against a fellow drummer for writing on a mail that allegedly said he was often spectral at other musicians and also called for a boycott of his band.

Michael Manuel Mandoza charged with libel Vhel Rodriguez, who introduced himself as a back-up drummer of veteran jazz fellow, in the Quezon City prosecutor's office.

In his complaint, Mandoza accused Rodriguez of sending out e-mail circulating in the Pinoyalternative e-group, an online forum with 25 members, and Philippine-music site ASIA-CHORDS, which allegedly depicted him as a bad night.

The e-mail was Rodriguez's account of an incident on May 27, in which he accused Mandoza of smoking in the hotel's hallway and in front of the entrance to the Tomas Morato disco.

Mandoza's band had been invited by Mina to perform in her show at Bamboo's bar on Tomas Morato disco.

After the band performed their numbers, Rodriguez continued Mandoza's abuse the damage to his equipment which the latter had used.

Mandoza and his manager later offered to have the parts repaired, but Rodriguez, in his e-mail, said nothing came out of the offer.

He added that he no longer intended to make Mandoza pay for the damage to his drum set which he placed at P600. He stressed, however, that he would never forget Mandoza's malice.

In his version of the events, Mandoza said his offer to replace Rodriguez's drum parts was made not as an admission of liability but only to avoid hassle.

He also denied that he was responsible for the damage to the instrument.

Metro Briefs

Free antifla shots

"THOUSAT DIS is better than cure." With this saying in mind, the city government of Manila yesterday distributed some 10 handouts, mostly senior citizens, with free antiflu vaccines. The same effort by the local government signed a memorandum of agreement with Sanofi Pasteur (Philippines) Inc., which allows it to buy the vaccines at a discounted price from the firm. Mayor Lito Atienza said the antiflu shots would be distributed to Manila residents for free in the forthcoming Manila Fiesta Carnival. Atienza, who is also chairman of the Manila Health Department's anti-smoking council, ordered the closing of the City Hall clinic for the duration of the fiesta celebration. *Jaime C. Laude*

Gas station remains shut

THE SMALL gas station a few meters away from the biggest public market in Pasig City remained closed almost two weeks after more than 100 liters of unleaded gasoline spilled from its underground storage tank. The Sea Oil gasoline station in Barangay Palatiw had closed down operations after the accident, but according to the City Environment and Natural Resources Office, the cleanup was still ongoing. The company's contractor last fell off exceeded for 150 liters of gasoline as of yesterday," said Cenro chief Nazario Gonzaga. He added that the company must also pay various penalties as well as apply for a permit to operate from the Department of Energy-Bureau. A clearance from the Laguna Lake Development Authority, a permit from the Bureau of Fire Protection and an environmental permit to operate from the Cenro before it could be reopened. *Alison C. Tandoc Jr.*

Anti-TB stamps out

PHILIPPINE STAMP DAY: Philippine Postmaster Rolando S. Tanlayan has endorsed the launch of stamps and the sale of the Philippine Tuberculosis Society Inc.'s efforts in the fight against the disease. The stamps are available at the fundraising department of the PTSI Quezon City headquarters compound in Real Street in Ayala Triangle, Quezon City. For details, phone call 7810147, 7811313 or 7810150.

Taguig residents evacuated after mudslide

By Jocelyn R. Uy

THE TAGUIG CITY GOVERNMENT yesterday ordered the immediate evacuation of residents living near the perimeter wall of Fuller Area in Barangay Western Bicutan after part of the wall collapsed over the weekend due to excessive rains.

Mayor Freddie Tinga has mobilized the Post Residence Satellite Government Center, led by Paul Michael Sagaral and barangay chair Marlyn Padlan, to supervise the evacuation of residents to two covered courts in the same barangay.

About 30 meters of the 100 meter-long wall collapsed at around 5:30 p.m. Saturday, causing a mudslide that left the homes of 23 families in lower dwellings. No one was reported injured but two cars and a bicycle were destroyed in the incident, Sagaral said.

"We are giving priority to the 23 families who were directly affected by the incident," he said, adding that should the rains worsen this week, they might have to evacuate 40 more families.

Sagaral said the other parts of the wall were also in danger of collapsing since these were full of cracks.

The perimeter wall separates the Fuller Area, a community of more than 1,000 families, from a privately owned lot in the barangay, said Ana Antero of the city's public information office.

City Health officials led by Dr. Rolando Dizon and personnel of the Office of Social Welfare and Development under Miss Jordan were dispatched to the area to provide the affected families with medical and relief assistance.

The city engineering and building officers were also ordered by Tinga to look into remedial measures that could be taken to prevent similar incidents from happening again.

Did you know

IN 1903, FORMER President Ferdinand Marcos secured Executive Order 893 creating the Light Rail Transit Authority which would oversee the construction and operation of the LRT system case 1. The first train of the agency was from Doa Carlo Santos-Viadoz.

Construction of the 15-km elevated railway between Monumento and Baclaran began in September 1981. It was formally opened to the public on December 1984, with a fare of P2 in the first half of this year, 54.50 million passengers rode on the LRT. *PDI Research*

Owwa money ended up in the 2004 polls; here's how

On Target
Rommel Tabbad

BEING A TIP FOR THE SENATE on where to find the missing funds of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (Owwa).

A total of P1.4-billion in Owwa Medicare funds was transferred to the Philippine Health Insurance Corp. (Philhealth) before the 2004 presidential election.

The money was supposedly to fund the health insurance coverage of all Filipinos overseas by Philhealth. Republic Act 7875 supposedly mandates Philhealth to do that.

In a memorandum to Executive Secretary Alberto G. Romulo dated Nov. 10, 2003, Finance T. Buijar, then Philhealth president and chief executive officer, proposed the transfer of the Owwa Medicare fund to Philhealth.

"The proposed transfer will have a significant bearing on the 2004 election. I will be unable to explain in greater detail the far-reaching implications of the transfer after I exit that we must prematurely," Buijar told the Executive Secretary at that memo.

No wonder Duque is now the health secretary. The Cabinet post was his reward for that brilliant idea.

* * *

Executive Order No. 182 cancelling out the transfer of the Owwa Medicare fund to Philhealth was signed by the President by then Executive Secretary Alberto G. Romulo.

The EO was issued on Feb. 14, 2003, a year and three months before the 2004 election.

Section 2 of EO 182 stated: "Transfer of Medicare Funds of the Owwa—The Medicare Funds being administered by the Owwa shall be transferred to the PHIC (Philhealth) within sixty days from the effectivity of this Executive Order."

* * *

The fund transfer was not done outright by the sitting. It was in tranches. Each tranche was executed by a resolution.

One tranche was for P530,302,440. It was covered by Owwa Resolution No. 889 approved on Feb. 2, 2004.

The resolution was signed by among other officials, then Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas as chair of the Owwa board of trustees, Owwa Administrator Virgilio S. Angeles, Owwa board member Ariel Ilarde and Administrator Rosalinda Baldoz of the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration.

That was for the Owwa Medicare Fund amounting to, as cited then, P1.4 billion, according to an inside source of the Owwa.

The rest of the Owwa fund was loanable out to the National Treasury where the money was deposited by the Department of the Budget and Management under then Secretary Emilia T. Boncodin.

On Feb. 16, 2004, or three months before the 2004 election, Boncodin wrote Labor Secretary Sto. Tomas endorsing Owwa loan. A government-owned firm in operation to a regular national government agency (NGA).

"In such, the Owwa shall be subject to existing separation, compensation, budgeting and accounting rules applicable to NGAs. In this regard, all proposals and transactions appurtenant thereto, shall be addressed and coordinated with the Budget and Management Bureau (BMB)," the BMB office handling the DOLE (Department of Labor and Employment)." Boncodin said in her letter to Sto. Tomas.

Boncodin was one of several Cabinet members who campaigned what is now known as the "Hyatt 10" that called for the President's resignation in the wake of the "Hello Garci" scandal.

Boncodin is now probably gathering votes for the coming 2007 elections for taking part in the 2004 elections that side.

* * *

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Sri Lanka rebel says truce is void, war's back

COLOMBO—SRI LANKAN TAMIL rebels declared on Monday that a cease-fire agreement with the government was void and that they were no longer bound by its terms, as a top Tamil Tiger said on Monday, as fighting raged in the north and east for a second day.

The five military casualties were caused by mortar bombs fired by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the Sri Lanka defense ministry said in a statement.

"Troops retaliated with the assistance of the air force and artillery...," it said. Ground sources confirmed that over 35 Tigers (rebels) also died during the retaliation.

S Pulidevan, head of the Tigers' political wing, told a Tamil radio station (Sankathi 24 Network) that the ceasefire agreement has become null and void as the government's "continued and ruthless military offensive" against the rebels "has repeatedly warned of a return to war."

Pulidevan said the military had killed 15 civilians and injured 50 others in the past two days of fighting.

"The war is on and we are ready," added Nithi. "The war has begun. It is the government which has started it. The war ... Militarily, we have cleansed the fight back if the Sri Lankan army moves our areas."

Nithi is not the Tigers' main spokesperson, but he is one of their top officials and their political head Balasingham is also reportedly warned of a return to war.

The military said five soldiers were killed and six injured during a ground battle in the east. The Tigers dismissed army reports that dozens of their fighters were killed, saying three had died in a rebel-barred rocket attack.

The Colombo stock market was 1.5 percent lower in afternoon trade in the wake of the Tiger statement and fresh violence, said Nishan Kaluwitigala, an economic analyst at brokerage C.T. Smith.

The rebels, angry at President Mahinda Rajapakse's outright rejection of their demand for a separate homeland for ethnic Tamils in the north and east, have pulled out of peace talks scheduled next week in Geneva and threatened to launch a separatist campaign.

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The WORLD

Lira Lorenzo B. Quiza

PROTESTER displays a mixture of her basic demographic ID

HUNDREDS of thousands gather in support of Mexican presidential candidate Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador to demand a ballot by ballot recount of the last July 2 elections at Hermes Zocalo plaza in Mexico City

A million Mexicans demand recount

MEXICO CITY—SUPPORTERS OF A DEFEATED Mexican leftist presidential candidate blocked major arteries in the heart of Mexico City Sunday and vowed to hold their ground until the electoral court orders a vote recount.

Hours earlier, Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador rallied more than one million supporters in the capital to denounce alleged election fraud they blamed for his narrow defeat four weeks ago.

"I proposed to them that we stay here, in a permanent assembly until the resolution of the [electoral] court," the former Mexico City mayor said of the crisis in El Zocalo, the main square of the capital.

Government officials said some 1.2 million of his supporters filled the capital's streets chanting "no to fraud" and calling for a vote-by-vote recount of the 41.7 million ballots cast in the July 2 election.

Lopez Obrador asked his backers to set up 47 camping sites across the gridlocked city's main thoroughfares, promising they would be entertained with cultural performances while peacefully lobbying for his cause.

"I told [them] myself will be living in one of those sites while we are holding these meetings," he said.

"I know that when I propose it not-to-vote, but it is intended for our cause."

Five hours after his speech, dozens of tents were already installed on two of the capital's most attractive sites for tourists and there was ahead of the Monday morning rush hour.

Hundreds of protesters had begun to block the Paseo de la Reforma, the major road that leaves the capital south to north, which earlier in the day had been crammed with marchers.

Sunday's protest was the third demonstration in support of Lopez Obrador, who was barred by conservative Felipe Calderon in the polls by a bare 0.56 percentage point margin.

Lopez Obrador has formally filed complaints with the electoral court citing evidence of cheating.

On July 18 the party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) sent an 830-page document to the court claiming that the vote was invalid. They have also supplied videos and other alleged evidence of shenanigans back three dates.

The electoral court, which has the power to order a partial or a full vote recount, must declare the official victor in the poll by September 6. The winner will assume the presidency on December 1.

Lopez Obrador maintains that if the court does not order a full recount it will be entering up "general election fraud" to challenge the results.

"I am the president of Mexico... [so a recount] will win the election. Despite all the government fraud, we won on July 2," he told on the Univision television network. AFP

Pakistan, India set to resume peace moves

DHAKA—INDIA AND PAKISTAN expect to resume a peace dialogue on Monday that has been severely strained after New Delhi blamed Islamic militants across the border for train bombings in Mumbai earlier this in July.

Indian Foreign Sec. Shyam Saran and his Pakistani counterpart Riaz Mohammad Khan—heads of the respective foreign ministries—are due to hold talks on the sidelines of a regional conference in the Bangladesh capital of Dhaka.

Although no formal schedule has been set, they were expected to meet late on Monday, officials said.

Issues on the two sides' would review bilateral issues and to and address such others as are in the light of the Mumbai attacks and its impact on the trap to peace process.

"The message will be that Pakistan and India need to work together," Saran told reporters ahead of the talks.

"We are engaged in a peace process which is important to both countries and it is very important that we continue to allow this process to move forward there must be a commitment to eliminate cross-border terrorism in whatever form it assumes," he said.

The July 11 bombing of commuter trains and stations in Mumbai, India's financial and entertainment hub, killed more than 180 people and cast a long shadow on moves between New Delhi and Islamabad to end longstanding animosity. Reuter

TAKE TIME TO SMELL THE FLOWERS
A sunflower about to bloom watches toward the sun, July 26, north of Jamestown, N.D. Some fields in the area are in full bloom, while others are just beginning to show their vibrant colors. The federal government is trying to do away with a little-used sunflower insurance program rather than handing advice on how it, farmers say. AP

Nato takes Afghan 'toughest mission'

KANDAHAR, AFGHANISTAN—Nato is due Monday to take command of security operations in southern Afghanistan, embarking on its most ambitious mission and hoping to turn spectacular will break a grinding Taliban insurgency.

Nato's International Security Assistance Force (Isaf) will take over in a small ceremony here from a US-led coalition that drove the extremist Taliban from government in 2001 and has since been hunting down its fighters.

The event in Kandahar, the biggest city in southern Afghanistan, will see around 9,000 British, Canadian, Dutch and US troops fall under Isaf command.

The operation is Nato's most ambitious undertaking, eclipsing the air campaign against Serbia in 1999 when Nato strongman Slobodan Milosevic voted to crush an ethnic Albanian uprising in Kosovo.

The force will be more than twice the size of the coalition presence in the south last year and will boost the number of Isaf troops across the country to about 20,000.

The limited number of Afghan and foreign troops in the Taliban's heartland, an area adjoining Pakistan where many of the movement's fighters are said to be trained, has in part been blamed for increasing unrest in recent months.

Officials have said they expect all the surge in violence ahead of the transfer, and a media survey in six regions eager to play on fears among the nearly 39 coalition troops ordered to the area. AFP

Study finds disparities in asylum rulings in US

WASHINGTON—AN EXAMINATION of thousands of immigration cases has found wide disparities in the rate at which judges grant asylum to people seeking haven in the United States, according to a study released Sunday by a private research group.

One judge in Miami denied 96.7 percent of the asylum cases before him in which the petitioner had a lawyer. It was the highest denial rate in the nation between the beginning of the fiscal year 2000 and the first two months of fiscal year 2005, the study found. In contrast, a New York judge granted asylum in all but 9.4 percent of such cases.

Ten percent of the nation's immigration judges denied asylum cases in 46 percent or more of their decisions, while another 10 percent of judges denied asylum cases in 14 percent of their rulings during that same time period, the study found.

The report, which examined 207,240 immigration cases from fiscal year 1995 through the first five months of fiscal year 2005, was done by the Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse, a research group at Syracuse University. The data was collected from the Justice Department, which oversees the nation's immigration courts.

Because of factors that included changes in immigration law, the clearinghouse divided the asylum cases into five groups, three dealing with cases between 1994-1999 and three divided between 2000-2005.

The study found wide variation in how different judges in the same courts treated. It reported that more than 80 percent of asylum seekers from that used El Salvador were denied asylum for the period beginning in 2000, while fewer than 20 percent of asylum seekers from Afghanistan or Myanmar, formerly Burma, were denied. AFP

David Burnham, co-director of the research group, said the findings seemed to call into question the government's "commitment to providing a uniform application of the law." Immigration laws be all equal," Burnham said. He said no explanation for the Justice Department. A spokesperson for the Justice Department did not return calls for comment on Sunday. AFP

James Bond film set goes up in flames

LONDON—UP TO 60 FIRE fighters Sunday tackled a major blaze on the set of the forthcoming James Bond movie "Casino Royale" at Pinewood Studios, west of London, emergency services said.

A spokesman for the local fire brigade said gas canisters may have exploded inside the building, causing the roof to partly cave in, and that the blaze were injured.

No one was reported injured in the fire, which took firefighters 90 minutes to bring under control and some 22 years after Pinewood Studios' 007 stage was burned to the ground during filming.

Regarding Sunday's fire, a spokesman for Pinewood said in a statement: "We have been informed by the fire service that there were no casualties involved. The cause of the fire has not yet been established.

"We do not know the extent of the damage to the 007 stage, although it is believed to be significant. The crews are still in attendance at the site." He added that filming was not taking place on the 007 stage when the fire broke out.

"A production had completed filming, and its sets are seen to the process of being removed." Eight fire engines were called to the studios at 11:18 a.m.

Witnesses said smoke from the blaze could be seen up to 10 miles (16 km) away.

Television pictures showed large plumes of black smoke billowing from the collapsed roof, which was made of corrugated steel. AFP

WHAT'S INSIDE

- Schumacher wins anew, puts Alonso on the run /A24

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SPORTS

Editor Teddyboy S. Malasmas

Text us your feedback: inquirer sport send regards by message to 2300 (Globe) or 2882 (Smart)

- Pavin ends 10 years of PGA futility /A24

Ekwe triple double lifts Red Lions to solo NC lead

By Mart Anthony Reyes

SAN BEDA ENJOYED THE LUXURY OF EXPERImenting with new plays against Jose Rizal U but still showed enough punch to win, 84-69, last night and take solo leadership in the NCAA men's basketball tournament at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium.

The first lions played mimic a dramatic at one point and had an legitimate point guard in one to maneuver but still managed against its scoring but still rewards within eight games.

Star Jun Ekwe's work Wily Bansil denied he tried out new things and insisted that they were not tired from the game against Letran last Friday. He took the more adapted practice last Saturday to rest.

If that game with Letran lasted left them exhausted, Samuel Ekwe didn't show it as the Nigerian player registered the first triple-double of the season with 30 points, 15 rebounds and 11 blocks on top of three assists and steals.

"I have the big guy to thank for," said Bansil referring to the 6-foot-6 exchange student. "He asserted himself in the dual-ed last."

Aside from Ekwe, Bansil—whose Lions are now in the green with eight—also leaned words for rookie off guard Peng Taulad, who delivered 15 points, six assists and one rebounds.

Jeddy del Rosario shot 12 points and grabbed 14 rebounds to power Mapua to a 76-53 victory over San Sebastian in the other interscholastic.

The Cardinals raised their record to five wins against three losses while handing the Stags a fifth loss in eight games.

The Heavy Bombers, who took their second loss against one win, also suffered trouble trying to contain the Red Lions.

Jason Ilesa and Jayson Mocon looked out, while key Bombers Floyd Dollaosala and John Villaro teamed free throws in the fourth quarter.

Bansil played after sweeping with just a "mere sweeping" from the league management committee for hitting Letran's Reyes thumbs during their game last Friday.

The incident happened in the fourth quarter when witnesses said Bansil hit Reyes with a closed fist while they jostled for position. But the Mapuan denied out to suspend the guard, claiming he

SAN SEBASTIAN'S Gilbert Bulawan (13) beats Mapua's Johnson Gonzales to the rebound during their game yesterday

Eala clears Reyes' PBA coaching comeback

By Francis Ochoa

PETES: To Jun Miguel

CABAGNOT: AWOL

SAN MIGUEL OFFICIALS are set to announce within the week the appointment of Chot Reyes as coach of the Beermen in the coming Philippine Basketball Association season and commissioner Noli Eala says no conflict among Reyes' duty as national coach.

The appointment, if a source through, has Eala effect on his coaching duties with the national team," Eala told the Inquirer is pointing.

Jun Miguel officials are expected to shuffle the San coaches as Reyes is set to bring in his own assistants to Jun Miguel, sources said.

No details have been heard pending the announcement except that Dobles coach Jun Isaguirre will take on assistant to Joey Dobles, who will take over the Kings' reins.

Reyes is currently in Qatar with the national team while Dobles is vacationing out of the country and will be back this afternoon.

Espanol is to be bumped off from the line Miguel Beermen while Ali Peek Cone, who will become licensed to one of the four SMC-owned ballclubs.

Softest sanctions

In another development, Eala said his office is ready to apply the softest sanctions on erring Sta. Lucia Realty star Alex Cabagnot, who has gone AWOL (Absence without leave) for the second time in two years.

"We have looked at his case and there are risks, more right at first glance," said Eala, a lawyer by profession. "There are precedents already in his case and I assured Jim [sala governor] Roddy Duterte[sala] that we will not spare him and if he asks for it."

The Academy boss added the commissioner's office

BASA 9/D

BEACH VOLLEYBELLES: Sherry Lapuerta (left) and Nerissa Bautista take a dip in the pool of the Clearwater Country Club in Clark Field, Pampanga, after winning Saturday's third leg of the Pepsi-Inquirer Beach Volleyball Tournament. Lapuerta and Bautista easily disposed of the pair of Lorna-Ann Cruz and Charlyn Castro, 21-14, 21-8, in the finals (RAUL J. SANCHEZ)

Manalo pockets $99,000 2nd prize

German ace Hohmann rallies to stop Pinoy bet in finals

Prize Money Breakdown:

Title—$200,000 (Florian Hohmann, Germany); Second—$50,000 (Dennis Manalo, Philippines); Third—$30,000 (Gerry Grubb, JPN); Fourth—$15,000 (Dion Nguyen, JPN); Fifth—$10,000 (Ulf Swaiger, Germany); Sixth—$8,000 (Evgeny Dutov, Russia)

Nine other Filipinos (total)

7th-8th place—$20,000 each (Francisco Bustamante, the Pinoy Pistolero, Hendrik Luat, Ramon Ramos); 9th-12th place—$15,000 each (Raymund Steng, Dennis Gamopay); 13th-16th place—$9,000 each (Randy Nebe, Lorenzo Manuel); 17th-25th place—$7,000 each (Jose Nieto, Marvin Nieto)

FILIPINO MANILOS MANALO came up empty in the pivotal break and allowed German Florian Hohmann to claim the record $200,000 winner's purse in the International Pool Tour Ninth Asian Open 8-Ball Championship Monday at the Orleans Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Leading 7-6 and going for the clincher, Manalo scattered a shy break which Hohmann capitalized on to clear the striped balls (9-13) and force a tie.

The 2003 World Pool champion then cleaned the 8-ballon his break and, with no easy leaves, swiftly cleared the solids (1-7) en route to the victory and the biggest purse in pool history.

Played doggedly

The 30-year-old Manalo, who played doggedly yet despite the death of his father Ojan before the $2-million IPT tourn started, settled for the runner-up prize of $99,000 (about P5.1 million).

"Sayang, pero ginawa ko ang lahat para sa kapwa Pinoy," said Manalo, who also represented the country in the 2007 World Championships. Another 9F Pinoy

IPT North American Open 8-Ball Championship

A PHOTO from the tournament's official website shows Florian Hohmann displaying the attache case containing the $200,000 champion's purse as Marlon Manalo (in brown coat, at right) looks on.

also struggled in the

Chance up: Papa is happy whenever he is pero I'm encouraged na ako sa pool. I'm encouraged na ako sa billiards, he's my inspiration," added Manalo, the Asian snooker champion in 2001 who trained in billiards the same year.

The 27-year-old Johnson won the leg in double-elimination but made nothing on the break, allowing Manalo, also the 2003 WPC champion, to clean up. A run-out in the second frame gave Manalo a 2-0 lead, but a defensive in the third stuck gave the former German title holder the chance to swing ahead, 4-2.

Another 11 ball drawn the ire and ruled Hohmann and Manalo were tied for a win in the 9th another empty break by Manalo gave Hohmann one game, but another netted ball allowed Manalo to take the next three for a 6-5 lead.

Hohmann equalized at 6-6, but popped the cue ball into the side pocket on his break, paving the way for another Manalo run, 7-6.

But luck wasn't on Manalo's side as he again came up empty in the 8- and break.

Full of confidence

"I wasn't nervous at all in the entire match," said Hohmann in the official IPT website. "I felt really confident. I had a good night's sleep, slept eight hours, and woke up still full of confidence.

"I had my chance, an that last run out. My game could've earned that last rack, it was so easy."

Hohmann, who won the 2003 World Pool title at the expense of PE Cristopher Alex Magalpate in Cardiff, Wales, relegated the Filipino to a 2-3 (9-8) finish, with Dennis Orcollo defeating third player Gerry Grubb, 9-6, and Japan wizard Efren "Bata" Reyes settling for fourth and $15,000.

Acknowledging the congratula-

Mendoza runs away with 3rd duathlon title

THE PHILIPPINES' SHERONE Duathlon champion's winning run isn't over yet.

Gerry Mendoza bagged his third international crown this year after becoming the first Filipino to triumph in the tough Multisteff Malaysian Duathlon finals in Petaling, Malaysia, last Sunday.

The 28-year-old Mendoza teamed on his strength in cycling to rule the event in two hours, 23 minutes and 34 seconds.

"I just paced myself in the first 20-km run and pulled away in the bike event as my coach (Mark Candelaria) instructed," he said.

Trailing in second after the 10-km footrace, Mendoza came back strong in the 40-km bike and never looked back in the final 5-km run of the six-section event.

The Cagayan Pampanga native was more than five minutes ahead of second placer Jon-Paul Hotchkiss of New Zealand (2:29:09). Shahrom Abdullah of Malaysia took the third spot (2:29:51).

Mendoza also topped the International Duathlon Championship in Thailand last March and the Asian Duathlon in Subic last April.

He plans to compete in the Multisteff Series' final legs in Oct. 15 Bintul, Malaysia in preparation for the 2007 World Duathlon Championships. Another 9F Pinoy

Jumpstop, Venture rule Visayas Streetball Challenge

TEAM JUMPSTOP CAPTURED THE BOYS' title and Venture kept the girls' champion ring as complete a University of San Carlos (USC) sweep/celebration in the Visayas regional qualifying tournament of the 2006 Adidas Streetball Challenge at the Sweet Home School in Cebu City.

Representing the Jumpstop franchise were Daniel Belva, Giovanni Padilla and Adrian Alforque. Venture, hampered by an injury to its star player Jessa Zamboanga of Southern Philippines, 11-7, in the finals.

Venture, starring Leo Terence Regidor, edged Cebu's Tribesit Team, 6-5, in a repeat of last year's girls' title clash.

Regidor scored five points, including the insurance shot. Her teammates were Bubbles Ybañez, Carol Diane Consuelo and Jennelle Stephanie Macias.

Jumpstop and Venture joined the other qualifiers from Davao (Mindanao) and Baguio (Luzon) who reached the national finals on Aug. 11-13 at the Mall of Asia.

The last qualifying tournament for Metro Manila zeroes in darted at the Market! Market! on Aug. 5-6.

With defending boys' champion West Negros College of Bacolod bagging off at the last tournament, the Visayas leg thrusted on all-Cebu cast of 20 boys' and seven girls' teams.

Jumpstop dominated dance wearing Ilon Lego, 9-8, in the semifinal round while Venture edged out another USC team, Team 5-4, to earn a shot at the championship.

Runner dipped past University of the Visayas's Ingkilot Lugo, 9-5, to reach the finals of the four-nation competition. Ou year by Globe Greene, Charley NGM (6-2), Imidiatt, Pentecostal, Vice Mitsuoil Nitro, Blue Angel Alcohol, and Hero Energy Drink.

The boys' national champion will defend the crown, seven-on-a-year by Ian Beda, at the Asian Streetball championship in Guangzhou, China, according to Adidas Sports marketing manager Goody Cuenco.

Present at the awarding ceremonies held after the game were Gonzales Adidas marketing communications assistant manager Odette Salcedo and special guest Ryan Gregorio, head coach of PBA champion Alaska Aces. The tournament was organized by Adidas and tournament director Jay Ambanto both from Pentaro Sports & Events Management, Cuenco, national organizers of the year's Adidas Streetball Challenge.

All's not lost for defending champ Tams

By Jaerion W. Pays

KELSEY PAUL WRITTEN ALL OVER COACH Bert Flores' face after his Far Eastern Tamaraws secured their first win last June duo for the UAAP men's basketball tournament.

"I kept telling my players to stay confident," said Flores, finally managing a smile.

"We lost in close games, so I was pretty convinced we had to bounce back [Tuesday]. We were down. The problem was our end game."

The defending champion Tamaraws, who lost only once last year, found themselves at the end of their opening with four straight losses.

The Tamaraws recovered after blasting winless Adamson (1-4) 94-66 victory against the University of the Philippines Maroons last Sunday.

"What's important now was we needed to get our end game together offensively and defensively," said Flores. "They showed desire and heart."

STANDINGS	W	L
Ateneo	5	0
UST	4	1
Univ of East	3	1
Adamson	2	3
Far Eastern	1	4
Univ of Phil.	1	5
FEU	1	4

GAMES THURSDAY
(Rizal Memorial Coliseum)
12 n.m.—UP vs NU (lo)
4 p.m.—Ateneo vs. UST (rio)

Flores said he is scheduled to discuss with the team strategy for competitive chequer the departure of star forward Gaston, Mark Jay and NU Rhods.

"I told Jason [Ti], Jayson [Castro], Paul [Asi] and [Chris] Cruz they shouldn't lose their confidence," he said. "He had two more meetings, we have to motivate the players."

Although the Tamaraws' best possible first round finish would be at 2-4, it was more important for Flores that his players get a positive boosting.

"We needed to regain some confidence, to play with pride," said Flores.

UP's Miguel de Jesus goes for a save, hemmed down off FEU's Alfred Gerilla (1) and Francis Escollano in Sunday's game. —NINO JESUS

RP's biggest taekwondo meet draws stellar field

THE BEST ATHLETES FROM PHILIPPINE Taekwondo Association affiliate all over the country will see action in the 20th Prime Minister Taekwondo Championships on Aug. 3-6 at the Rizal Coliseum.

PTA president Robert V. Aventajado expects about 1,200 jins from 12 regions, ARMM, Cebu, Davao, Northern Capitol Region, Bicol and the different military services to vie for honors in four individual events and eight team events.

PTA vice president Jhang Chou Hong is sure of the organizing committee, which has Sinchang competition as its senior and adviser groups of senior executives and grade school categories.

Hong said cash awards of P1,000 to P500 only for players and two alternates, and that members of the RP team may fight for their respective home squads in the championships sponsored by Pepsi, PSC, Accel, Mito and Samsung.

Competition starts at 10 a.m. but the opening ceremony will be held at 12 n.n. on Aug. 5.

Philippine Olympic Committee representative to the Philippines Francisco J. Elizalde, Veterans president Abdul Al Haddiqah, Prince Amir Mirado Akmerawad international sports association heads.

Asiaq team: to Be Sold. Lt. Lilo, three, 19 Sarlisan, 18, for Japan, international School, San Agustin (Lt. Gen. San, Blue Boys, Loudes School, Lt. Lilo Town 100, Baguio, double, First flight, Lt. Blue, Pangasinan, Baguio Taekwondo Union, Cebu, Davao Sports Schools, Most pioneer, Sampan, Nassau, Gil, Everest, Jason, Laguna 10.0% general Turbo, Baja Area, 09 Pista, Philippine Military academy, PNP Police, PBA and Schools, General Luna

Lady Eagles survive Lady Falcons; FEU stay unbeaten

ARMED BEFORE ASSISTS, 40-10, BEA GABE MARY believe would be a prevalent to the UAAP women's basketball finals as the Blue Eagle guns over the weekend.

But the Eastern refused to be left out of the picture as it demolished University of the East, 50-33, in Session One women's action with a 6-0 record.

In the day's other match, University of the Philippines bowled to 7-1 (9 victory over Ateneo (1).

If won the Lady Maroons' second win against the same number of defeats, while the Lady Bulldogs remained winless in five outings.

Veteran center Ali Barrameda scattered 16 points on 5-of-8 shooting and had five rebounds and one block to pace the Lady Eagles, who have won three of their four assignments thus far. The defending champions are tied for second with the idle Tigresses of University of Santo Tomas.

The Lady Bilcons, the 2004 champions and last year's runners-up, dropped to 5-2.

Cheryl Rojo and Trisha Limpiscos each scored nine points for Arroyo, which led most of the way before almost collapsing as Ateneo rallied late in the final period.

Rojo finished with 13 points and six rebounds to lead the Lady Falcons, who only got a measly eight points from big guy Mercedes Arroyo.

Bella Flaks scored 14 points on a 6-of-9 shooting, while Ateneo Ardinero added 10 points and 10 rebounds for FEU. Roxsan Mariano tallied 10 points and 20 rebounds for UE.

Jessica Barcelon led the Lady Maroons with 13 points, while Nicholas Ramos and Jocelyn Mojar scored 9 points apiece to pace the Lady Bulldogs.

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MEMBERS of the RP team composed of Emmanuel Jr. Thomas Lee and Freddie Sandico (kneeling) and Enrico Jr. Sandico pose for a souvenir photo after a round-off party hosted by sponsor CATS Motors Inc., led by company chair Deng Ke (seventh from left), and president Felix Ang (left). Photo here are Daimler Chrysler president and CEO for Southeast Asia Dr. Rainer Thiel and Cathay Pacific country manager Vivian Lo (second and third from left) and CATS Motors PR director Amy Arcilla.

Filipino bets in high spirits for Mercedes Trophy Golf

THOMAS LEE, EMMANUEL TE AND FREDDIE Sandico, the champions of the inaugural Philippine Mercedes Trophy Golf, hope to continue their winning ways when they compete in the Asian regional final-slated Aug. 4-7 in Queensland, Australia.

The trio earned the right to participate in the 20-hole team and individual competitions after topping the national final held exclusively for Mercedes-Benz car owners at the Jin. Elevn Golf Club in Imus.

They will join six elite international cast from Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Taiwan and Vietnam.

The team regional will be held at the Hope Island Resort Golf Club's links-style layout, which is characterized by bunker-laden fairways, and The Glades Golf & Spa's championship course designed by Greg Norman.

Head of delegation Enzo Sevilla, who hosted with CATS Motors Inc. president Felix Ang a send-off luncheon for the trio last week, said the RP lads will have to cope up with the chilly weather and with playing without a caddy.

"The enthusiasm shown by the players are signs of good things to come," said Greg Yu, dean CATS Motors, the hosts-chief sponsor.

The other bankers are Cathay Pacific Airways, Smart Infinity, Arrow Shirts, Lacoste, and Jin. Elena Properties.

SPORTSWATCH

82 fights up in Religon derby

EIGHTY-TWO MEN'S RELIGIOUS DO TIP IN RELIGION Mayo Cockpit's "Bloodsweat Festival" 8 undefeated seven bouts at 40 cut, and with Lakpad Dragons and Thunderbird Enterprises as rival backers. The 158-no-by-three-day combined is handled by Philly Lapa of the Mayo says a prize pool of P1 million. Four Island contenders will be getting down to their feet in the competition. Mindanao Region, and Luzon's Cordillera region. Thursday's second round eliminations. All qualifiers will be down to the championship on Saturday. Meanwhile, the screening of dogs for the Bonifacio 5-Odds Derby on Aug. 27 is ongoing, said host Eddie Dimson. For inquiries, call 0917-2274, 823-3166 or 0920-98-12.

RACING
BY TIM YAMSON

Competitive pre-season games slated

THOSE LOOKING TO COMPLETE THEIR SUMMER runs have the Philippine Basketball Association (PBA) pre-season games for reference.

Expanded and more competitive pre-season matches will be played this year by all 10 teams, including newcomers Welcoat and will feature rookie and veteran-free agents.

The games are set from Sept. 1-17, just before the 32nd season of the PBA opens in October.

Venues have yet to be determined although league commissioner Sonic Uson has proposed to play the games in the provinces.

He said prospective pro-level organizers who wish to host an event will have to register with the Commissioner's Office.

With the initiation of free agents, the 10 teams are allowed to have 18 players on their lineup during the three-week long pre-season games.

The series of matches will allow unsigned players a final shot at showing their skills and, hopefully, hook up with still-incomplete ball clubs.

"I'm encouraging all free agents to hit up with the Commissioner's Office, so we'll know how to spread them out," said Uson.

Eala clears . . .

from page A21

to help out in the case of Cabagnot, who went training and then one action in a Un summer league, where he joined a team that played against Talk 'N Text.

"You're not allowed to play for any other team once you are contracted by a PBA team," said Tolo.

MLB team manager Ariel Magno said the ballcore owners willing to explore all options in dealing with the Cabagnot case and were not ruling out the possibility of filing a suit against the cager.

The Realtors gave Cabagnot 72 hours to explain his disappearance. They were expecting an answer yesterday.

But Magno could not be reached for comment as to whether Cabagnot had already responded to the team's ultimatum.

Cabagnot also seen AWOL after he was drafted No. 2 overall last year, saying he wanted to **continue his studies first before playing pro**fessionally. He used the same reason in "disappearing" some time ago.

Cabagnot, sources say, have a possible lifetime ban from the league if he does not show up.

LA SALLE will try to fix stuff in another season this year

Archers back in Homegrown Cup cagefest

THE LA SALLE ARCHERS WILL RETURN TO the basketball scene as one of nine collegiate teams in the Fiber Homegrown Cup this October.

La Salle joins UAAP rivals Ateneo, Far Eastern University of the East, University of the Philippines and University of Santo Tomas and reps NCAA squads San Beda, Letran and San Sebastian in the tournament field.

The invitees are on a leave of vacation from the UAAP this season after their school were suspended for one year for eligibility infractions in varsity basketball the last three years.

The organizers have also prepared an exciting format for the tournament as pep squads of participating teams have also been invited to join a cheering contest.

Unlike in the usual cheering competition where all schools throw their stuff in one day, this season will pit the schools on a per game basis. And they will also have one host school.

Steps has teamed up with Fiber Flying V Sports to showcase the best collegiate pep squads. Athlete-celebrities, to be named in later dates, will judge the winning performances.

Cash prizes of P100,000 will be given to the champion squad, P50,000 to the runner-up, and P40,000 to the third placer.

Premier long-distance triathlon all set to rock

FOREIGN ENTRIES FROM THE UNITED States, Singapore and other countries in the region are expected at the starting line when the Subic Bay Triathlon comes off the wraps on Oct. 7 at the Subic Bay Beach Resort in Subic, Zambales.

The country's premier long-distance triathlon will cover 2 kilometers of ocean swim at White Beach Resort, 90 km bike portion across towns in Zambales and a 21 km run to Olongapo and the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority.

Race organizers expect ideal weather conditions for the swim and bike portions of the endurance race. The conducting segment will be run along undulating roads in the hottest time of the day.

The local government and agencies of Olongapo City, the province of Zambales and BMPA are backing the race. The sponsors include the White Beach Resort, New Balance, Fuji Eyewear and Solar Sports.

RACERS in last year's event in action in the bike portion.

Xavier dribblers pull rug from under Greenies

XAVIER SCHOOL SURGED OFFENDING Fatsoville champion La Salle Greenhills, 57-55, Sunday in the 21st season of the Hills SHOT Center Small Basketeers/Philippines/Pawerville basketball tournament at the Xavier School gym.

Ian Orsal scored on a dive and a running jumper with four seconds left to give Xavier its second straight win in Group A while dealing LSGH its first loss in three outings.

JR Lee paced Xavier with eight points while Ivy Tupaz led La Salle with 15.

In other Pawerville games, Loyola School (QC) ripped Holy World, 66-42; Don Bosco Technical Institute (Makati) downed First Asia, 48-39; San Beda whipped Antipolo Lady of Lourdes School, 91-56; St. Anthony (Sampaloc) La Salle Antipolo, 53-39; and Don Bosco overturned Immaculate Conception Academy-Quezon City, 46-36 in clobbering Don Bosco (Mandaluyong), 20-12.

In other SHP games, Ateneo walloped Poro Point, 62-16; Xavier outplayed La Salle-Antipolo, 30-8; St. Mary's College-Howard Shorin, 44-40; and Trinity College held off Don Bosco (Makati), 40-35.

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Opposition to Marcos Manila mayoralty rally

SPORTS

CHAMPS: Russia's synchronized swimmers perform during the final of the team free routine of the European Swimming Championships in Budapest, Hungary. The Russians won. AFP

Schumacher wins anew, puts Alonso on the run

HOCKENHEIM, GERMANY—FERRARI ACE Michael Schumacher have champions Renault on the run after surging to another crushing victory to overtake on Sunday the defending world title to a win, and his fifth of the season, marked a psychological breakthrough in the Germania two-win battle.

Before Hockenheim, Schumacher's home grand prix, Renault's Fernando Alonso had only to finish second in every race to keep of winning his crown.

No longer. The Spaniard's lead has been reduced from 17 to 11 points with six races remaining and his number one has disappeared. Renault are just 10 points clear in the constructors' championship.

"He (Alonso) must is going have to lose us in at least one race to win the championship," Ferrari technical director Ross Brawn said after his team's second-one-two finish in three since while Alonso limped home in fifth place.

"It is an important threshold for us, both mathematically and I think psychologically," he added. "It won't prevent it wins a great race but it is not a good result."

Schumacher, whose chances of a record eighth title had been written off by some, has

SCHUMACHER: Psychological breakthrough

like overcomeback and is again looking like the dominance force of 2004.

Behaving with wife Corinna and friends in the Ferrari motorhome after the race, his elevient happiness was in sharp contrast to the body language at Renault.

Team boss Flavio Briatore made a swift exit after the race without congratulating Ferrari. Fernando spoke to reporters only as he walked away, waiting his bag behind him.

Tyres were the bug with the Renaults suffering severe blistering of their Michelins, but the talk was also of the "team dumped" banned by the governing body before Hockenheim.

Alonso had challenged the ban, contending measures to declare them legal, but did not use the devices after the International Automobile Federation said it would appeal.

The single spring-mounted dampers improve performance by leveling out tire vibrations and keeping grip levels consistent.

Symonds agreed that not having them had cost the team some performance, and hoped for a dispensation to use them in Hungary next weekend pending the appeal, but Renault's diff cabler were a combination of factors.

"Ercolino he is a better situation but we're not a team to panic," he said. "We've already managed to bounce a lot through this race and even in the last weeks had to analyze it afterwards, a few very obvious things have come up. So sure that by Sunday night there'll be a lot more.

"I wouldn't say that we'd be completely out of everything by Hungary, but we've learnt so much today that we can get back a long way in, in just a couple of days."

Brawn suggested however that Petrol and their partners should take the credit for this turnaround. Reuters

Pavin ends 10 years of PGA futility

MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN—COREY Pavin ended a decade of PGA Tour futility here Sunday with a two-shot victory to win $1-million US Bank Championship.

Pavin holed out from the fairway for an eagle at the eighth hole en route to his first victory in 58 years.

"Things like that happen when you win tournaments," Pavin said. "I knew it was a good omen."

Opening the tournament with a PGA Tour-record 26 on the front nine of the Brown Deer Golf Club, Pavin never looked back.

He led wire-to-wire and finished at 20-under-par 268.

"I would have to be the guy who shot a 26 to start a tournament and didn't win," Pavin joked.

A former US Open champion, Pavin followed his spectacular start with three rounds. He had just three bogeys—all on Saturday—as he won for the first time since the 1996 Colonial, collecting $720,000.

"The journey that I have taken over the last 10 years to get here, all the work I have put in, what I have gone through, makes it very meaningful to me to get back here," Pavin said.

Pavin's final round of three-under 67 left him eight where he started—two strokes ahead of Wisconsin native and retired favorite Jerry Kelly who could not make any headway even as his playing partner finished with 19 straight pars.

"It was funny because Jerry and I just didn't make any putts today," Pavin said. "We have nothing down to him allowed the place this week I made nothing today."

Pavin, 46, made plenty of phenomenal shots Thursday, when he flirted with a magical 59 before settling for a course-record 61.

But his shot of the tournament came Sunday at the par-four 458-yard eighth hole.

From the fairway, Pavin lofted a six-iron that took one big bounce and was small feet before dropping in, bringing a roar from the gallery and doubling his lead to four shots.

"I had 170 yards to the hole," he said. "We thought it was just a smooth 6-iron, just a nice, very straight one and let the wind make it to the hole. I hit it, I looked up and it was pretty straight. It was just left-right and it came and fell towards the hole. It landed and I thought it was a little long.

And then it just disappeared. It went in."

Kelly birdied 11 and 15 but could get no closer and settled for his second runner-up finish of the season. He also was second at the Chrysler Classic of Tucson.

It was the 15th career win for Pavin, a premier but short hitter whose game has been underutilized by the lengthier balls and bigger drivers that have diminished the importance of accuracy.

After tapping in at the 18th hole, Pavin thanked a long-suffering and sometimes-ailment with his wife, Lisa. AFP

COREY Pavin reacts after making his fairway shot for an eagle on the eighth hole.

Gatlin, Landis dope tales rock US sports

LOS ANGELES—World and Olympic 100m champion Justin Gatlin revealed that he had tested positive for testosterone was granted as one event, perhaps is, blow to sports fans' faith on Sunday.

Gatlin, who faces a lifetime ban from athletics and the loss of the 100m world record he shares with Jamaican Asafa Powell, were public with the news on Saturday, as US fans were still reeling from the news that American four-de Fonzo champion Floyd Landis had tested positive.

Wire, the winner of cycling's premier race. Two days later, the winner of track and field's equivalent event," wrote the Chicago Tribune. "Never has the credibility of sport been more undermined by doping, nor has the morality of leading US athletes been more called into question."

"You don't know the name of what we teach kids about ethics and sportsmanship," Merrill Melnick, a sports sociologist, told the Tribune.

"Perhaps we need to take a look at the whole US sports system... Perhaps there is systems re-

GATLIN

LANDIS

rigging everything."

"I tend to believe Credibility is Dented Again," was the headline Thursday's headline played over two stories, the seven account of Gatlin's positive result and a column noting that Landis' protestations of innocence began as of lesser

The Los Angeles Times noted with dismay that Gatlin had been hailed as one of a new generation of US athletes who was carrying the sport out from under the cloud cast by the Balco-circulated steroid scandal.

"Instead of seeing words and fold, Gatlin may have perpetuated the evil that crippled it," the West Coast newspaper said. AFP

Clijsters trips Schnyder for fourth Stanford title

STANFORD, CALIFORNIA—Kim Clijsters' broader time of the tennis year always begins with hardcourts and American blue Coast breezes.

And the special season she's most by move with a title in the Northern California tournament that's become her home away from Belgium.

Clijsters won her fourth Bank of the West Classic title in six years Sunday, effortlessly beating Patty Schnyder 6-4, 6-0 in the only unbeaten in the event since 2002.

The hardcourt specialist got off to another dominating start in the tennis leading up to the US Open, where she won her first Grand Slam in last year. The self-hailed crowd at the tournament on Stanford University's campus showed her its loud favorite during a 52-minute

CLIJSTERS

match—her shortest of the week.

Clijsters won the tournament in 2001 and 2003, missed the event with an injury one year later, and then repeated her title last year, beating Venus Williams.

"It feels so familiar every time I come back here," said Clijsters, who never faced a break point against Schnyder. "It feels so comfortable. I stay in the same hotel... I like the intimate stadium, and from the first time I played here, I had that good feeling. It's only become better over the years."

Yes, Stanford loves Clijsters, and she loves it right back. She has won this tournament more times than anyone except Martina Navratilova, who has six titles in the WTA Tour event. AP

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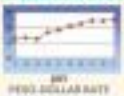


PESO-DOLLAR RATE

$1.48 = $ 1

¥114.47 = $ 1

GOLD: $638.50/t/$19.880

As of 5 p.m., July 31, 2006

Stock Market

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX

(See more market reports in Page B2)

Shares close 2.63% higher

BUARGY PHASES OUT TO RECAP TO 2003'S 2.63 percent higher Monday as investors brought into blue chips erased

CAUTIOUS B2

Pledges for RP start pouring in

China, Japan, WB, ADB extend $7.4B to fund RP infra projects

By Michelle V. Rorra

THE ARROYO ADMINISTRATION HAS RECEIVED $7.4 billion worth of pledged financial support for various infrastructure development projects, raking the government a step closer toward realizing its economic pump-priming program over the medium term.

The bulk of the amount, or $6 billion, will come from the Chinese government, which is currently seeking for places to reserve portions of its estimated $900 billion worth of grain international reserves. The funds will be channeled through the Chinese Exim Bank.

This was according to Economic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri, who told reporters yesterday that the government's economic team is set to finalize the list of infrastructure projects to be submitted to foreign creditors for financing.

Neri, who is also the director general of the National Economic and Development Authority (Neda), said the financial support from the Chinese government would be released over the next three years...about $2 billion a year.

The funds will come in the form of concessional loans that will carry an annual interest rate of 3 percent and payable in 20 years.

The country's chief economic also said that the Japan Bank for International Cooperation, as for the Philippines' biggest source of official development assistance, has agreed to give $1 billion worth of ODA for the 27th yen loan package.

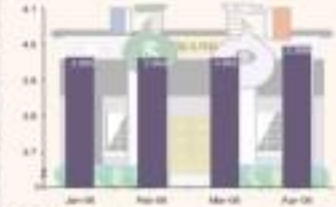
PLEDGES B2

INQUIRER MONITOR

Figures that matter in our nation's life

National Government Debt at P3.996 trillion (January to April 2006, in trillion pesos)

The national government's outstanding debt stood at P3.996 trillion as of end — April 2006, a 3.4-percent increase from the P3.867 trillion registered in the same period last year. Of this amount, P2.19 trillion or 55 percent is in peso-denominated obligations.



Source: Bureau of the Treasury
Erika R. Fortunato, PDI Research

Peso closes at 51.48, seen to revisit '06 peak of 50.88

By Dan C. Dantao

THE PESO IS EXPECTED TO SUSTAIN the strong momentum it has built up in recent days, fueled by a resurgence of foreign inflows.

Analysts also believe that the currency will again test the year's peak of 50.88 against the US dollar.

Yesterday the puso closed at 51.48 against the dollar, stronger than Friday's finish of 51.50/45. The local currency traded between a high of 51.49 and a low of 51.01 on the Philippine Dealing System.

Roberto Reyes, treasurer of Security Banking Corp., yesterday said the foreign exchange market would likely remain bullish on the peso for the rest of the year, as most external shock waves that triggered sell-offs in recent months had been factored in.

If global oil prices were to stabilize at the current level of $70 per barrel, he said this would be something that the market had digested and that the third and fourth quarters of the year would likely lead to further peso appreciation versus the greenback.

"Foreign funds are coming back, as the risk aversion is easing," Reyes said.

Based on the chart, Reyes said the foreign exchange market can breach to retest the year's peak of 50.88/81 seen in March. If the peso were to breach this barrier, the next target would be 50.50 against the greenback. The next barrier at 50.00.

With the positive peso momentum, he noted that there was a possibility that the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas may be able to keep its monetary settings unchanged by the end of the year.

"I don't think they need to act in tandem with the US Fed (Federal Reserve)," Reyes said. "The peso is better as the inflation outlook is also better."

IN THIS ISSUE

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■ **The Phisix follows** Wall Street /B2
■ **Treasury bill rates** fall sharply /B4

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GE imagination at work

The Phisix follows Wall Street

THERE WILL NOT BE MANY JOKES TODAY because I am in bed with flu. I think that's the name. I have fever, sore throat and a runny nose and the doctor said I got over-exerted upploading the SOPIA 1.19? Sure.

So no, I must rest but not before I tell you about my friend upstairs. She is getting old and cannot hear very well. We consulted her cardiologist about his loss of vitality and the doctor told him in a soft voice what to do.

That night, the cardiologist and the octogenarian drank to Hialeah and returned with a gorgeous 25-year girl with big boobs and a nice shirt. They stayed in his condo a whole week-with-out-surfacing and when I saw him, he looked positively radiant with good health and vitality.

He recently shook the hand of his doctor and congratulated him on his excellent services. The astounded doctor asked him what he had done. "I took your advice, doc, and got myself a hot mama, and boy do I feel good." The doctor was dumbfounded but eventually managed to stammer, "I said you have a heart murmur."

I waited for a really horrible, rainy day and revisited the Mall of Asia. The most unusual, three were evidently few people and we acted shopping without being excited to death. We tried the Super Bowl of Chino and that now we know is excellent. So was the food. The manager was a show man fellow but the lights were too bright so I asked him to dim them.

In a second shop, I bought Gregorian music, purely by chance.

My wife is taking a crash course in lifting.

The US stock market had a pretty good week and on Friday even the sluggish PSE:BAG jumped 2 percent. About 75 percent of the 2nd quarter results have been announced. Some companies disappointed while others did extremely well, particularly the giant oil companies. Overall, most companies attained or exceeded analysts' expectations and not a year-or-year basis, profit continued to show double-digit increases.

INTEL and AMD, the two largest US chipmakers, have been producing chips that operate at ever increasing speed. As a result, customers have been investing in the new technology and productivity has risen 3.5 percent. The price war between the companies has eaten into both their profits but each one is determined to be the leader.

Merry Christmas, Mr. Bearbull

Alex Salbuyeh

Only today, INTEL announced a new chip which is 40 percent faster than before and uses 40 percent less power.

Because these chips enhance new technology, companies are investing and the economy is becoming increasingly efficient. I see no danger of a recession.

However, Chairman BERNANKE's problem has just taken a turn for the worse. It was announced over the weekend that the economy in the 2nd quarter had slowed to 2.5 percent. This is a preliminary figure and may be revised but it is well below the analysts' expectation of 3.25-3.5 percent.

The slowdown is more than expected so BERNANKE will not want to raise rates again.

On the other hand, inflation has been steady at 2.1 percent with hourly pay and house avoided almost flat. But the latest data shows that "core" inflation has suddenly risen to 2.9 percent, way above the FED's target of 2 percent. So, to prevent inflation from getting out of hand, he has no rate raise.

What is the poor guy going to do with this CATCH 22 problem? I think he will raise rates once more and then pray for a divine intervention.

I still don't understand why they are the "core" rate, which excludes food and energy. This presumes that Americans walk to work, while consuming only cup water and eating fruits and plants from their garden. This is totally removed from reality and Dr. BOBC MORRIS says that the true inflation rate is 6 percent.

The consumer chief not might remove the price of crude oil from the equation if it is thought to be unsustainable, but it IS! However, it is absurd to remove food prices.

In our local market, the PHISIX, together with the rest of Asia and even Europe, has taken a cue as to where the next round of the bull will be. That has been behind by steady gains in Philippine stocks, particularly TEL, AC, MEER and GLOBE.

But buying has been averaging about P300 million a day recently so the great turnover of P1 billion, or a little more, is not particularly impressive. In the good old days, turnover reached P2 billion a day and if you convert the peso into dollars, the low turnover is even more apparent.

The 2nd quarter ends June 30 for most companies but as the corp'ers have reported, MERALCO announced profits down by 31 percent from a year ago but foreign brokers continue to accumulate the stock, which is rumored undervalued.

The reduced profit company invariably with share previous quarters showing losses.

PDIC announced a 30 percent profit dividend but this did nothing for the share price. Yesterday, SMC reported half-yearly profits up 70 percent but the shares did not move in a very strong market. Over the next month, all companies must report so face preparation.

Analysts are optimistic that most companies will report higher profits than a year ago and I think they are correct. There is a tsunami of buildings by stocks to rise in two weeks ahead of the results and those that do not, will, I think, be severely punished by the market.

I now include the dates when companies are due to announce their profits, as this information is valuable to short-term traders.

The government sold its first tranche of $500 million in bonds and $400 million 25-year bonds at very reasonable yields and the offer was oversubscribed 16 times. I am surprised that they did not exercise a greenshoe option to mount it to P1 billion.

The overwhelmingly optimistic sentiment and shows confidence in the Philippine economy. This recycled who plus the daily net foreign buying have helped the peso to strengthen.

Kim's immediate reaction of the Israeli's Ground's ultimatum that they should stop producing missiles and to retreat poses a serious problem.

Assuming that all five countries agree to ceasefires (this is doubtful), Iran has threatened to interrupt the flow of oil from the Middle East. This is potentially a far more serious problem than the Israeli-Lebanese conflict.

Condolences flow must have been disrupted by the imposition of rejection of Hezbollah missiles by both sides. So the fighting will continue for a few more weeks until both sides agree to a face saving compromise.

Comments at mrbe bull@hotmail.com

Security nets P1.01B in H1

By Doris C. Dumlao

SECURITY BANK CORP. YESTERDAY REported a 56.7-percent jump in net profit in the first half to P1.01 billion due largely to trading gains.

SBC president Alfonso Allanson said yesterday their revenues as of June rose by 12.7 percent to P3.08 billion from last year.

Non-interest income increased by 45.4 percent on the back of an 84.6-percent increase in gains from trading for-sight exchange and government securities.

The bank's strategy rebate on equity has significantly improved over the years, rising from a single-digit level after the 1997 Asian currency turmoil to an average 30% of 19.5 percent in the first quarter.

Last year, ROE stood at 12.5 percent.

SBC is also comfortable with its capital adequacy ratio of 24.2 percent in the first half, as target common core 14.4 percent as of end-2005.

"This places the bank in a very healthy position to leverage on its balance sheet and further build its loan portfolio as the opportunities arise in the marketplace," said the bank's chief finance officer Corbet Isturnaza.

Allanson said the bank's long-term thrust was to continue its growth from within.

He said the bank was not actively on the look-out for potential acquisitions but would keep the doors open for opportunities.

The bank plans to make more inroads into the corporate and middle income markets as well as the consumer business to boost its interest earnings.

Petron raises debt issue to ₱6.3 billion

Refiner encouraged by investor interest

By Abigail L. Ho

OIL REFINER PETRON CORP. HAS AGAIN increased the size of its maiden Euro-dollar corporate notes issue to P6.3 billion due to increased investor interest.

Last week, Petron said it had raised the size of its notes from P5 billion to P5.3 billion after receiving bids amounting to P12.2 billion, close to four times subscribed.

The notes fetched a rate of 8.875 percent, 83 basis points lower than the July 21 secondary market rate of 9.405 percent for government bonds with the same tenure.

In a statement issued after receiving the signing of the notes facility agreement, the oil firm said it had to again increase its notes offer due to strong demand from the participating banks.

"We are very pleased with the confidence placed by the investment community in Petron. They share our vision as we undergo a strategic transformation to ensure that we sustain our growth momentum," Petron chair and chief executive Ricardo Alcantara said in a statement.

The note holders include Allied Banking Corp., Manila Life Assurance Inc., Bank of the Philippine Islands investment arm, Insular Life Assurance Co., Philippine American Life and General Insurance Co., and as trustee for various trust accounts, ING Bank N.V. Manila branch, ING Bank N.V. Manila branch trust department. The Insular Life Assurance Co. Ltd., Metrobank Trust Banking as trustee, Philippine Business Bank, Rehabilitation Savings Bank and Security Bank Corp.

Arranger of the notes issue are BPI Capital Corp. and ING Bank N.V. Manila Branch.

Petron had said that the issue was the largest peso-private placement and the largest private corporate issue in the Philippines.

Petron earlier said that the proceeds from the notes issue would be used in it move to pave the oil refinery's modernization project (Pmap/PCC), now under construction at the Petron refinery in Bataan.

The Pmap/PCC will allow the oil firm to produce more high-value petroleum products such as diesel, gasoline and liquefied petroleum gas, as well as extract the petrochemical propylene.

Petron will likewise put up an additional refinery unit for the extraction of other petrochemicals, including benzene and toluene, and the expansion of its natural resource production capacity.

The new units, upon commissioning by February 2008, are seen contributing significantly to the oil firm's revenues and bottom line.

"We are very excited about the future prospects of a more profitable and resilient Petron, thanks to the progress we've been able us to achieve a new growth trajectory in the medium term," Petron president Khalid Al-Suldagh said. With a report from Reuters

Manila Water income up 25%

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

AVAILABLE SAMBA WATER CO. INC. (MWSS) today to increase 25 percent in the first six months to P1.29 billion from P960 million last year, due to higher water sales and operating gains.

Revenues, largely from billed water, rose to P3.2 billion as of June this year from P2.86 billion in the same period last year.

The company gets its revenues from billed water, environmental charges, sewer services and interest income.

Operating expenses, on the other hand, rose a mere 3 percent to P1.98 billion in the first semester from P1.87 billion last year.

Unbilled water or water lost to leaks and pilferage also dropped to 30.2 percent of its total water volume as of June, from 31.5 percent at the end of last year.

Billed volumes grew to 930 million liters a day (mld) as of June, from 869 mld as of end-December.

"These financial results enabled the company to invest P10.7 billion in the past nine years. Total new pipelines laid now stands at 1,600 kilometers," Manila Water president Ayala exec Jose Ma. Arnaldo said.

For this year alone, P4.5 billion has been allocated for expansion projects in the high growth areas of Taguig, Antipolo, Taytay-Cainta, San Mateo, Montalban, and some in Rizal—Binangonan, Baras-Rizal and Jala-Jala.

Aquatico also told Manila Water was poised to pursue growth opportunities beyond its concession area.

The company is likewise set to pursue possible service agreements with Asean countries for the medium term.

Concrete officials refused, however, to identify prospects.

It also recently announced it would bid for the government's 84-percent share in troubled Metropolitan Waterworks.

Manila Water will lead a consortium composed of MWC Company, MO Capital Corp. and Mitsubishi Corp.

Shares close 2.63% higher

By Pia Lee-Brago
Philippine Star

ing higher earnings for the second quarter, dealers said.

Philippine Long Distance Telephone (PLDT) led the charge as investors also bought into issues to cover losses, they said.

The composite index closed 61.27 points up at the day's high of 2,390.89, it eclipsed from the day and best performance since 27 when it ended at 2,463.37. It traded at 3 low of 2,328.80.

The all-shares index rose 39.25 points to 1,471.46.

Volume was 3.07 billion shares worth P1.8 billion (US$ 6 million). Gainers led losers by 72 to 24, with 46 stocks unchanged.

PLDT, the most actively traded stock, jumped P70 to P2,870. AFP

Powered by Reuters

Problem shelving

YESTERDAY DESPITE BEING A DOOM'S nday day the price of Equitable-PCI Bank shares in the stock market hit 397 pesos—the highest ever.

That may be a problem to Tessie Sy, the daughter of mall operator Henry Sy, founder of the SM group, which is still keen on taking over the bank as the supreme consolidator of SM and GSIS.

Together, the SSS and the GSIS already put close to P58 billion of our contributions into EPCIB shares. Thus, the increase is good for the members. It means the pension funds may even make a little profit out of their investment in the bank.

To solve the problem, Tessie by most accounts has more money to acquire EPCIB in a total buyout of the GSIS and SSS. So that she shelves the takeover plan.

Moreover, based on what I heard in banking circles, a foreign investment house did an acquisition study on EPCIB, and is primed the bank at more than P1.00 per share.

* * *

That study is not a secret to the other stockholders such as the SSS and the GSIS.

For one, it will only prompt GSIS president and general manager Winston Garcia to demand a much higher price in selling the GSIS holdings to the bank.

Unlike SSS president Corazon de la Paz, Garcia has been fighting the SM group takeover scheme.

Garcia warned the SM group to pay a good price for the GSIS holdings—and for the SM group to pay GSIS.

Only recently, in fact, in an attempt to put an end to the internal squabble in EPCIB, Garcia agreed to sell GSIS' holdings to the SM group at P52 per, which was lower than the minimum price he set earlier at P54 per.

After only a few days, Tessie Sy changed her mind back, wanting to bring down the price to P46 per. The deal fell through, of course.

But now the market price is up to P67 per, and if Tessie Sy still wants a deal with the GSIS, Garcia will just have to increase the price.

Or else ... well, he will never hear the end of it from the millions of SSS members, not to mention the Ombudsman.

* * *

But what's driving up the price of EPCIB shares?

I'm sure that the well-oiled PR machinery of the SM group will hammer on the media line that Garcia is not considering to do with it. You know, price manipulation!

The thing is, if you tell the stockbrokers of the GSIS, they will tell you that the pension fund did not buy a single EPCIB share yesterday.

If you talk to a young lawyer named Mon in Bermudez, who also sits on the EPCIB board, he will tell you that the stock market must really consider EPCIB a good bank.

Incidentally, that's the same Bermudez who was ousted from the EPCIB board.

Anyway, right after the news about Bermudez's ouster broke out, the market price of EPCIB shares plummeted by P1.1 per in just a single day.

So what's driving the price up today? Well, another possibility is the absence of two foreign financial institutions in the trading of EPCIB shares at the moment.

The one, word has been going around the market that the two institutions (with German and Swiss sounding names) were pushing down the EPCIB shares intentionally.

They were dumping the entire block of EPCIB shares back and forth between themselves, thus pushing down the price in the process.

But who knows whether or not the two foreign firms will go back to their evil ways!

* * *

With stock market investors looking loudly on EPCIB shares, the GSIS and the SSS may not have a better story than now to bid out their holdings, which amount to more than 40 percent of the bank, meaning, they can fetch a handsome premium.

The problem is, the SSS-owned shares are still included in a case before the Supreme Court, regarding the bright idea of De la Paz and some "guidelines" about giving the SM group advantage over other potential buyers, through the so-called "Swiss challenge."

With the Brilliant CPA board member De la Paz as its president, the SSS agreed to bid its shares in the SM group for only P43.50 per, after a hastily called members meeting of the commission en banc—on a nonworking holiday in 2003, at that—which was right before the controversial 2004 presidential elections.

And in this, Jorge Ocampo questioned the "deal" before the Supreme Court. This probably inspired the SSS to change its mind and, taking it would bid out the EPCIB shares ... but on one condition.

And that was, the SM group would simply have to match the offer of the highest bidder. Ocampo thought that this so-called "Swiss challenge" was just another term for "highway robbery." He also questioned it before the Supreme Court.

Question: What is taking the Supreme Court so long from making a ruling on the SSS case? I mean, hmm, it has been almost two years. I think the SSS needs the money.

Still, the SSS keeps on claiming that it has no money to improve its members' benefits, although the SSS has money to pay for De la Paz's three lucky consultants (P150,000 a month each) who are actually running the SSS.

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METROSOFT, INC.

Pledges for RP start pouring in

From page B1

The World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, the Philippines' two other major sources of ODA, would each give $200 million.

Earlier, the Department of Finance said the Arroyo administration would embark on a series of infrastructure development projects, estimated to reach P290 billion, starting this year until 2010. The purpose is to jumpprime the economy which has lagged behind its Asian counterparts in terms of public spending for infrastructure.

Because the government's revenue generation capability reportedly cannot cover the expenditure requirement, it would have to rely on soft loans from foreign lenders.

The Arroyo administration has set a goal of increasing the government's spending for infrastructure to 5 or 6 percent of the country's gross domestic product, which is what governments in neighboring countries are spending on the average.

Currently, the Philippine government's spending for infrastructure only stands at about 2 to 3 percent of GDP.

Some of the government's big-ticket projects include the establishment of new airports in Zambonga, San Vicente in Palawan, Cagayan, Siquijor, Iloilo and La Union, and the improvement of two airports in Batanes.

Also, there are the interconnection of the north and south Luzon expressways, the extension of the Light Rail Transit to Bacoor in Cavite, construction of the north terminus of the Metro Rail Transit and the Light Rail Transit, and several farm-to-market roads.

The government also wants to start work on the connection of the Subic-Clark-Subic Road to Hagatna Port through Santa Rita, connection of the Marikina-Infanta Road to the port of Real, connection of Clark to Batangas Bay via Metro Manila, creation of an advanced facility in Nul Imus through the Cagayan Zone Authority, opening of a seaport in Balanacan, Buyo Bay, upgrade of the Subic Seaport, and the building of a toll-to-toll-off port system that will link Lucena, Quezon with Boac, Marinduque.

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BUSINESS

Treasury bill rates fall sharply

91-day T-bill rate down 63.1 bps to 5.45%

By Michelle V. Remo

TREASURY BILL (T-BILL) rates yesterday dropped across the board, with total bids amounting to more than four times the government's offering of P6 billion.

The 91-day treasury bill rate, which banks use in pricing loans, fell 63.1 basis points to 5.447 percent.

Tenders for the 91-day T-bill hit P7.84 billion against the offering of P2 billion.

"The market is bullish. It looks like the increases [in the US interest rates] had come to an end," said National Treasurer Omar Cruz in a press briefing after yesterday's auction.

The 182-day bill rate fell 43.7 basis points to 6.557 percent, with the bids reaching P5.8 billion against an offering of P2 billion.

The rate for the 364-day bill fell 7.103 percent, 31.2 basis points lower than the previous run. Still, with the total tenders hitting P8.095 billion.

The finance of the Treasury's auctions room, tenders accepted P6 billion in offers, or P2.68 billion from rollovers.

He said the increases in the US Federal Reserve's key policy rate became more likely with the recent posting of a lower-than-expected US economic growth.

"They [US Federal Reserve] don't want to [increase] it [interest] to interest rates] at the risk of stifling the economy," Cruz said.

The steady increases in the US Fed policy rates in the past had dampened investor interest in and put higher risk premiums on money rates issued by emerging economies, including the Philippines.

Earlier statements made by Fed Chair Ben Bernanke that hinted an end to the US rate hikes had calmed down the financial markets.

Cruz said the high level of liquidity in the domestic market and the improving fiscal position of the government also helped ease the pressure on the T-bill rates.

He said there about P16 billion worth of government securities would fall due this week—P4.4 billion in T-bills and P5.5 billion in Treasury bonds.

Despite the decline in the T-bill rates, Cruz said the government was not inclined to increase its domestic borrowings. He said the BTr might even cut its scheduled domestic borrowings in the remaining months of the year to keep its borrowing mix within the target of 50-50 in favor of domestic credit interest.

As of the first six months of the year, the borrowing mix stood at 51:49.

The government has reduced its foreign commercial borrowing from $900 million to $700 million. To be aligned with the credit rate target, the domestic borrowing should also be reduced.

The BTr issues P6 billion worth of T-bills and P7 billion worth of T-bonds every other week.

Clark duty-free stores doing good

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CLARK SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE—As a source of imported consumable goods, Clark is not down and out, that yet.

In 2005, all the 35 duty-free stores here raked up a total of $294.8 million in sales, breaching the four-year high of $17.7 million hit in 2001, Clark Development Corp. reports showed.

The latest sales level of $11.5 million was registered in 2003.

The upbeat trend appeared to persist, as sales in January to May hit $6.8 million. This could be higher as CDC has yet to include sales made by four more Pueblo in the first five months of the year, based on half of the sales in 2005.

We, all in not too buoyant in this sense. It is a fact not lost to Carlito Lozano, who lives up C.M. Recto Avenue, home to duty free stores here.

"Mabuhay ka rung mamili (The shoppers have declined in numbers)," observed Lozano. He started his car watch trade on the same strip when the stores began selling in 1997.

Not too rosy

CDC data revealed more glum realities. From a high of 22 in 1997, the stores were down 38 last year and to 14 as of May 2006. These still operated are Rajas, Bubbasaco, Clark Interior, Clark Liberty, Gold Stare (Bonded), Coastal Is Co. Inc., Food and Beverages, Gilroy MCDC, Oriental, Pathian, Pueblo, San Diego (Expanded), and Value City.

The stores have been acquiring from and Sweet goods over the last 10 years.

CDC said that from a high of $177.3 million in 1997, the value of goods brought in declined steadily to only $3 0.4 million last year.

Imports did see increase in the first

AGGRESSIVE marketing efforts help duty free shops keep market.

five months even when the gross approval, and to below $2 to a dollar.

Aggressive marketing

But the stores have become more aggressive in marketing, enhancing their inventories by offering once-a-month week-long sale. They now take one promise on selected items in a rig, also offering.

Pueblo keeps its exchange rate lower, at P51.50 to $1 on Sundays. Dillon stores go for P51.75 to $1.

"Our line edge over the others, and even inside outside of Clark, is our low prices," said Ellen Garcia, store manager of Oriental, of how her company fares in the area.

That's possible because duties are lifted and most of the imported goods, especially from China, will cheaper.

Despite the 12-percent VAT, liquidized goods from the United States, Europe and China keep the customers coming, she said.

Oriental and store San Pedrano ground $1.1 million and $1.5 million, respectively, last year, making them the second and third biggest sellers in the area, CDC reports showed.

Eventually, Garcia said, it would be the shoppers who would decide how long their retail sector should stay in the business.

Singaki-hunter Arlene de Asua said duty-free stores in Clark are the best places to do shopping. "My P1,000 can fill six bags when I shop here," said De Asua, who hails from Zambales, Nueva Ecija.

Low prices

Non-Clark residents are allowed to buy $25 worth of goods per purchase. Individuals and their relatives are allowed a $100 shopping privilege monthly.

Tourism boosters said these limits were relaxed to boost sales. It is said that the Iranians (retailers) were among the big buyers.

Noise about smuggling, an assurance that the sector had fought off to early years, resulted in have waned. The Bureau of Customs reported occasional attempts but none of them was ever blessed on the stores.

Critics have been quite as well, not backing investors on how these stores drain precious dollars in response against locally manufactured items.

Philrealty to resume P1.5-B project

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

PHILIPPINE REALTY AND HOLDINGS Corp., which is 17-percent owned by the Cayetanos Properties Group, expects to resume the construction of its P1.5 billion condominium project, called the Antara North Skyline Tower, before the end of this year, Philrealty chair Gerardo Cayetano Jr. said.

The project, called Antara North Skyline Tower, forms part of the P4-billion Antara North Complex project in Quezon City. It was started in 1996 but was suspended in 2000 due to the Asian financial crisis which blunted investor zeal and Philrealty's debts.

Andrea Skyline, which is the first of the three towers of the complex, is Philrealty's flagship residential project in Quezon City.

In 2001, Philrealty filed for corporate rehabilitation to pay all its creditors and deliver the Andrea Skyline units to its buyers.

Lanuza said Philrealty hoped to raise P1.1 billion from the sale of the remaining 200 unsold units in the 180-unit Andrea Skyline. The company earlier raised about P500 million from the sale of the first 80 units.

Lanuza said Andrea Skyline would be completed 24 months after the completion of construction work.

Philrealty president Amador Hocut said the company would finance the Andrea Skyline project with the sales proceeds to be generated by another project, a joint venture with Xcell Property Ventures, amounting to about P900 million.

The Philrealty-Xcell Property joint venture is putting up a project dubbed "The Icon." This involves the construction of two 56-storey towers on Philippine's 4,300-square-meter property.

Philrealty recently reported earnings of P122.5 million in 2005, a turnaround from a loss of P94.4 million in 2004.

In a related development, Greenhills Properties said it gained P71.3 billion from the sale of its interest in its two national technology thrift (Bank) in Union Bank of the Philippines.

Banco de Oro first half profit hits ₱1.26B

By Doris C. Dumlao

METAR TYCOON HENRY SY'S BANCO DE Oro Universal Bank has reported an unaudited net profit of P1.26 billion in the first half, up by 6 percent from year-ago level, on higher interest earnings and trading gains.

In a statement, the bank yesterday said its net interest income grew by 15 percent to P3.8 billion largely to the expansion of its securities and loan portfolios.

It also reported a 9% percent increase in deposits during the period to P200.7 billion.

Net loans and other receivables grew by 33 percent to P133.4 billion, while nonperforming loans went down from P6.9 billion to P6.7 billion, bringing its NPL to total loans ratio to 4.4 percent.

Banco de Oro said its non-interest income also remained strong at P1.8 billion in the first half of the year despite revaluation losses due to rising interest rates in the second quarter of this year.

Non-interest income, exclusive of treasury-trading activities and the one-time gain from the consolidation of the credit card subsidiary, also registered a 20-percent growth from year-ago level.

Trading gains surged to 25 percent from year-ago level due to the consolidation of the United Overseas Bank of Singapore's investment units into the parent bank. Expenditures also increased with the product and branch expansion efforts undertaken by the bank.

From 180 branches as of end-2005, BDO's branches as of the first half of the year stood at 224.

Total resources in the first half of 2006 stood at P284.3 billion, 45 percent higher than year-ago's P196.3 billion. The growth was mainly due to the 9-percent increase in investment securities to P119.3 billion from P79.4 billion in the first half of last year.

"This further enhances the bank's liquidity position and its ability to take advantage of future investment opportunities," the bank said.

The bank's first half results translated to a return on average equity of 12.2 percent and a return on average assets of 0.90 percent.

Samsung gets big boost from growing LCD TV market

By Reynaldo W. Dantiago

SAMSUNG ELECTRONICS CO. LTD. IS slowly regaining its position in the local television set market with the recent introduction of its Bordeaux liquid crystal display television product range.

Ignacio Ilano, president and chief executive of Samsung's Philippine operations, said the brand performed well in the last three months as compared with its other brands, Sony and Philips.

Ilano said the company's research firm in the fourth for Bloomberg finds and a month of actual consumer awareness, which showed that four out of 10 prestige TVs sold during the period were Samsung Bordeaux units.

"But the Japanese rivals are expected to fight back in the second half, starting price battles and increasing promotions," he said. "Sony is in bid to stop Samsung, hired the services of Dante Canova to promote its Bravia series."

Ilano said that while it was expected that the Director's charisma would help increase Sony sales, Samsung was optimistic that it would be able to continue defending the market through its other products like the Giants and LCD TVs.

The official said Samsung was hosting its one-componentes in LCD panel production and implementing local marketing programs.

"Two years ago, Samsung was considered a struggling brand that even our partners were not confident enough to sell to," Ilano said.

"The has changed since the unification of our marketing strategy," he said. "We patently invested in our research and development to enable users to see that the Samsung product."

In a statement, the company said it had sold at least 2 million units of the Bordeaux since it was launched globally last March.

NETCHOICE, the ATM for rural banks, thrift banks, microfinance institutions and cooperatives, was launched recently with the full backing of the financial community, and the IT-telecom sector. Those who attended the launch included (front left): Land Bank of the Philippines vice president Librarian S. Dimaya, Rural Bankers Association of the Philippines president Gov. William Hotchkiss, Filarcan Development Bank president Eric Hamdrigan, local country manager Ricky Barzaga, Opportunity Microfinance Bank president Noel Alcalde, Rep. Giovanni Gonzalez, Mabuhay founder and treasurer Jesus Dela Cruz, BSP managing director Ma. Dolores Yuvienco, Diebold country manager Julius Servando, World Bank and Asian Development Bank senior adviser Victor Santos, PLDT first vice president Cesar Enriquez and Microsoft country manager Antonio Javier.

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LIFESTYLE
Editor Chole Bunal-Ferrares

MONDAY ARTS & BOOKS • TUESDAY FITNESS • WEDNESDAY ZEST

Dancing up a storm

By Gilda Cordero-Fernando

I JUST SAW THE LATEST BENCH underwear show in Araneta Coliseum, which I will not miss until I'm cremated.

At most, the dome was filled to the rafters (14,000 seats)! It is Bee Chan's way of giving back to its buying public that salutes him (even the ones that don't wear his things). All women's establishments advertise, but never for why Bee does—which is all the 'nots'—with colors that hurt on exposure, whose wives tend to perspire a deadly.

And this year's show, as in all the previous ones, was a success. You can't turn The Summit down pan.

I'm happy that reporter Lucy was finally released from her legs. I wish they would erase Richard's "Indina Pinas" headlines. The All Stars Dancers (who toss in Italy and are now in LA for the WORLD hip-hop competition) are a massive talent. The judges awarded more plus but most of the costumes were flat. So were the talents and pointers.

I wish Superman had a cape with a Filipino flag and a Filipina sheet because even Wonder Women couldn't hold a candle to Beauties Bandy. I couldn't take my eyes off the deep-dive Filipina navy suit Jhanna Flores and do-si-do Jai Alai, but the show more choice than was good for it.

Congratulations for the tremendous job of putting all these personalities together on one stage including the latest "Big Brother" kids. I still like Bubby Dacasnagal and his Emil best! (The end.)

After party

Afterwards, there was a friends party in Binondo over Peso Jose. There could've been less guys, chaos with crowded, then-deteriorated, then one of the hip-hop dancers, three-time The Top who runs Embassy, then Miguel Bustos who was searching for the meaning of life above the din. Even Bee Chan's pretty and proper older sister, Jennifer Lim, was walking around with her husband Jeffrey and telling a reporter how interesting it was—and was it ever. Interviews who read, get her to dance on the stage! I almost succumbed. Nobody offered me an Evening Terry. Sadly, my athletic days are out and Mimi's Classic and Sevens Dublin and I departed.

Live band dancing

An entirely different "art and culture" group that now uses cupcakes in BGC's...Elio Abaya to...Karina Bautista...Jimmy Lim, Susan Medina, Q Pimentel, Mr. Ann Dumaraos, Real Country—and many others—also cut the live band dancing in hotels and other buildings. The Penthouse, the Discovery Suites in Ortigas/Ayala, the ex-Intercon/ex-Ritz with his band (all three!). In Manila: Hotel, Captain's Bar has the live band while in Resorts Tanay there is a popular dance place (straight) called Bikes. The only senior citizens (reputedly) go to Club Filipino in Greenhills, which is always full.

I am happy enough to be dancing even if, as usual, I am the oldest in the group (which isn't that young either). We consume platefuls of mangoes with our P350,000 consumable entertainment fees.

The surprising thing about dancing today is that it is now considered "exercise"—a talent that even members of sports. There is almost no body contact. I think that took the romance out of dancing. Gone is the old cheek-to-cheek. But there most people now dance with DIY anyway, maybe it's not such a loss.

In Subic, an all-girl group can dance successfully, among themselves, as we've seen on our once-two-or three females to one or two males. There is often "lane" dancing, facing the band, sometimes led by young DJ's who can also be engaged solo by a guest. (Between P500 per hour, though prices vary for single dances).

No spouses, please

Once, I asked Bee's wife, Lyn, if she would join us and she solemnly shook her head.

"Do you know how long it is to dance with your own husband?" she retorted.

Later, Karina said Lyn goes dancing with a group of her own. So, that, I guess, is an unspoken rule in these couples' stage. No husbands, please, and no wives. (That's good because I wouldn't ding mine if I find him up).

"The dance space nowadays," patiently explained Karina, "are classified as 'live band' or 'aerobic.' Mobile means DJ's and tapes are played. Bench used to not go for it. If you like Color Factory you go to a live band. That's an also generally cheaper (P200 a hea).

"The live band places you go to attract an older crowd," Bikes condescendingly explains, "Saya mahirang ang iban para hindi mahirap ang maintindi. Kulay ring mabo lights. Like in piano bars, the band pauses in breaks so the energy level of its guests."

The popular "mobile" ballroom places like ex-mistresses are Simsimh Mesa in Libis across Starwood, Harmony on Annapolis Street, Greenhills in Pasig, Barrio Fiesta and Ultima Philippine Plaza, Roxas Boulevard, the grand Cruise Filipino, UN Avenue and the other Cruise Filipino, Roxy Cuneta Pwee's at the airport, Good old Jo The Mood, owned by Lucy Casa, is on Remedios Circle. The Makati Association Country in Rockwell has ballroom dancing, too, on Fridays.

In Quezon City there's The Mave in front of Veterans' Memorial Hospital, Fiesta on Timog Avenue, Mayon's on West Ave. (reputedly high end, Quezon City Sports Club on E. Rodriguez Avenue also has its ballroom dancing days.

"But if you're really broke," says Maria, "you can go to Quezon Memorial Circle, mobile/to. There are remaining OPs who will dance with you for any amount."

"And of course there's the Luneta, even cheaper, 6 p.m. and 7 p.m., open air, tape cassette long. Oh sus naman Manda Hotel above pa, tag sa Dancer at tapat ng bahay ng mahirap na Jaro ka...napamahiran ka mahir yon!"

"Oh, yes! There's ballroom dancing now at Ayo Intern...or is it Mayon?...ano ba. Tawag to Church, Rockefeller courtside...pinagsabihan ng music. Ang sabihan may sumbat, ang pwesto ka bye!"

Ballroom dancing

Actually, I hate ballroom dancing. What I think I'm good at is a freeform dance that I learned from a classmate, but it requires no use. Ballroom dancing, like ballet, has rigid rules! But my friends say developers are analytical, sequential and organized—left brain, much like computers and accountant heroes.

I decided that ballroom was both less demeaning and boring and soon found myself in a dancing class in Jhon Manila with Jerry Gonzalez, Tecla Velasquez, Sylvia Vasquez, Pepe Aquino, Pe Fernando, Elvira Reyes, Julie Molina and Rita Cascada.

Rita Reyes's dance studio is a well-lit, air-conditioned place surrounded by plants which has no cave-in-ness. Rita believes that ballroom dancing has changed women's lives—from endowment, martyrdom, boredom or whatever, and that it is her mission to help it along.

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Rita loves ballroom dancing and has access to a pool of DJ's. There are usually four or five of them to eight or 10 of us, once a week, 2-4 p.m., although other groups have other arrangements in the room studio. Tel. (917) 4864541.

The DJ's, 20-32 years old, are Jun Boy (graduate), Ned (dropout), Tonee (who quit his industrial properties), Jhonny (cured) and reverentially Mon (old, dark and handsome), and Roger who has long curly hair and has won a contest. Roger is my favorite because he seemed less into me (once in the dance floor we do my-thing event) (I make a mess of it. Each of the DJ's dances with everyone of us. None seem to mind.

Different strokes

To my countrymen, I soon realize that the dramatics are the strandes that I know. Making one of those side dips with one foot sliding up the man's inner thigh? modern art must do. The tango, evolved to international standards, has an interesting pompous touch that I did not know from my cousin Max at 16. Even the Viennese Waltz has accepted late-something grand and unsurprisingly, danced with Rita's husband at a 90-degree angle. And I thought the foxtrots was the one most "fickle" foxtrot.

But Rita reminds me, "Ma'am, you know how to protect, you're very good at style. You just don't know the steps."

One day I brought my blind sister who loves to dance to Rita's studio, a bit apprehensive about how everyone else would react. But they welcomed Tess with open arms and showered her on whatever she did a few months. All the DJ's were enlisted than Tess could dance better than I.

A month later I brought my Ambrosio designer friend, Steve de Leon, too. Steve is gay. He seemed no more to dance one night past but once he had shown himself to a girl after a few hours, the DJ's accepted Steve's dainty steps and the dispositive in his hair and taught him how to lead.

Next time I think I'll take a deaf guy or Jesse's wife. Then I will know for sure if they have really passed the universe's test of acceptance and love.

Gilda Cordero-Fernando just launched her children's book "Bird Wings," published by Anvil, and if you still haven't gotten your copy of her award-graphicized "The Last Full Moon" you better do.

MASTER STROKE. Dancers on floors at the recent Bench Fever show. DATACHOM

Dance is now considered 'exercise'—there's almost no body contact and they've taken the romance out of it

You may be thirsting and not know it

By Anne A. Jenkins

JUST HOW WELL-HYDRATED ARE YOU?

Athletes and gym rats know the drill. Eat a sensible breakfast to fuel those metabolisms and boost energy, and drink enough fluids to get through a workout. Sounds simple.

But do you know that 75 percent of fitness athletes begin their practice already dehydrated? In major health clubs in Chicago and San Francisco and the United States, 50 percent of 400 participants start their workout dehydrated. Most of them don't even know they're losing fluids faster than they can replace them.

This is according to a recent study by the Gatorade Sports Science Institute (GSSI), the world's largest privately funded sports science research facility.

Established in 1988 and based in Barrington, Illinois, GSSI aims to help athletes optimize their health and performance through research and education in hydration and nutrition.

"When athletes and health buffs are dehydrated, they[are going to find it difficult to do the exercise and they're not going to get much out of it," says GSSI's Robert Murray, Ph.D., exercise physiologist specializing in sports nutrition.

Body of water

Water constitutes 60 percent of a person's weight. An average person loses about 1.5 liters of body fluids just by sitting, standing, walking, reading, sleeping. In other words, just by being alive.

A mere 2-percent loss of body fluids, considered mild dehydration, already affects activity requiring strenuous performance; a 3- to 5-percent loss affects exercise time and reduces the ability to concentrate and make quick decisions. Losses of more than 4%-5% percent could be fatal.

Worse, dehydration's effects sneak up on you before you're even aware of them, slowly accumulating as days, weeks and months go by without adequate fluids. Thirst is a poor indicator of dehydration.

"People usually don't realize they're dehydrated. Children and active people come to practice thinking they're fine but they actually are not," said Shawn Ma, Ph.D., senior scientist at the GSSI.

From GSSI's studies in Australia, Korea, China, Philippines, Japan and Thailand, Murray noted a third to half of those not replaced only with 0.5 liter after a practice or workout. Urine is a simple but foolproof indicator of dehydration. A dark yellow or amber urine is a clear sign of dehydration.

Dehydration is an issue, obviously, when people are sweating. In a hot and humid environment like the Philippines and Bhutan, it is most important for people, especially active people, to moderate their hydration. Continuous movement, however brief, is bound to raise body temperature and cause perspiration.

"Dynamic bus movement impact on hydration [has] more. Filipinos[sweat more, [so] they'll sweat more and are, consequently, more prone to dehydration," Murray said.

Water not enough

While not diminishing the value of water, Murray stressed that, for physically active people—athletes and gym goers—sports drinks like Gatorade is a must. Gatorade, he said, is just like water with additional benefits. Containing the right amounts and type of carbohydrates and electrolytes, it provides benefits and advantages in terms of hydration and performance that water couldn't supply.

Electrolytes, minerals like sodium, potassium and calcium, play a key role in balancing body fluids. People lose electrolytes when they sweat. Carbohydrates provide energy for the body and the brain.

He said the delicate combination of sodium, electrolytes and carbohydrates helps speed up re-hydration and facilitates overall absorption so the fluid gets into the bloodstream more quickly.

Gatorade's special formula for the fluid to be rapidly absorbed by the body. Fluid has to move from the stomach to the small intestine to be absorbed. Gastric intestinal discomfort may occur if it does not leave the stomach immediately.

Gatorade is scientifically prepared to be absorbed by the body an hour to water. It takes a mere minute for Gatorade to begin flowing into the bloodstream, and in 15-20 minutes all minerals are into the body and out of the stomach.

It is wrong to assume that Gatorade is for serious athletes alone. Murray said gym rats wanting to lose weight won't see worry that Gatorade would provide additional calories to burn.

He said a bottle of Gatorade contains about half the calories of regular sodas and fruit juices.

Research, he said, shows that Gatorade actually helps people consume less calories throughout the day because of the carbohydrates it contains. The carbohydrates take out the hunger experienced during a workout so one is not likely to go on binge and consume dinner afterward.

"People feel better, are able to exercise longer and harder that they actually burn more calories during their workouts and keep their calories to a minimum during the rest of the day," Murray said.

E-mail the author at ajenkins@philstar.com.ph

THE KOREA National Football team during a "sweat test" conducted by the GSSI.

Most active people don't even know they're losing fluids faster than they can replace them

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK

Reverse wood chop and side leg lift with medicine ball

STRENGTHENS: TRUNK muscles, shoulders and hips.

Equipment:
Medicine ball (weighing 4-6 pounds)
Options:
Rubber ball, dumbbell

Exercise technique:

1. Stand with feet about shoulder width apart and ball at left hip.

2. Move the ball diagonally from your left hip to your right shoulder while simultaneously shifting weight to your right leg and lifting your left leg sideways.

3. After desired number of repetitions, repeat on other side.

Performance tips:
1. A more advanced variation of the exercise is to move the ball in a diagonal pattern with straight arms.

2. Be sure to shift weight from one leg to the other, as you standby the ball from down to up, otherwise you won't work the crunch muscles as effective-ly.

3. Another option: Come down into a squat with ball at left hip. Straighten legs and simultaneously move the ball diagonally from hip to shoulder while lifting left leg sideways.

Repetitions:
10 reps per side

No conflict between religion and the paranormal

PART 1

HERE ARE THE REST OF JULIAN QUAN'S questions about my work in parapsychology or psychic research:

What is the basic ideal development (institute)?

It is a small organization established in 1988 aimed at expanding people's consciousness and hastening their evolution. It develops and conducts training programs and workshops to develop people's inner mental faculties and powers. The institute is open to any man or woman regardless of color, race, religion or political beliefs.

What gave you the idea to establish the institute?

My background is business management. I've been in corporate life for over 25 years, specializing in human resources, management training and development, as well as consultancy.

As head of human resources, I've seen the utter failure of many industrial training programs that address only the employees' conscious mind and external behavior. Nothing was done to entire their consciousness or inner faculties.

A simple example: Most weaknesses by developing programs that would assist people's inner minds and enhance their innate powers or abilities for practical purposes.

How would you key in religion with the paranormal?

I see no conflict nor is compatibility between religion and paranormal phenomena. Religion is a matter of fact, all religions, whether Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism or Christianity started with a paranormal phenomenon, with a vision or contact with a supernatural or divine being.

Jaime T. Licaros

Since I believe that "truth is one," it cannot contradict itself. Truth is truth whether it comes from God or the direct himself.

I think the problem lies in the over-zealous evangelists, especially by Christian religious authorities, that everything that is paranormal or supernatural must come from the dark side. This is not true at all.

Even Jesus Christ performed so many paranormal wonders, like when he provided the loaves, small pieces multiplied, healed the sick, walked on water, changed water into wine and revived the dead. Calling them miracles does not change their paranormal nature.

From these science fit with the supernatural and paranormal?

Not quite. I say true sciences cannot be in conflict with paranormal phenomena. However, because of the reductionistic, mechanistic and materialistic paradigm that modern science has adopted, it has dismissed many aspects of reality that fall outside its narrow perspective.

So, consciousness, the spiritual and the mystical are considered outside the scope of mainstream science. But true science should encompass all of reality, should it not?

But, as things now stand, science and the so-called paranormal phenomena seem to be incompatible. In fact, the paranormal is defined as that outside the scope of what science considers natural.

So, there you are! The conflict between the two is a question of definitions. It is more superficial and accidental rather than substantial or essential.

The thing are very much affected by spirits, but are spirits also affected by the living? How?

The answer is yes. When a person dies suddenly—at the[because of accident, violence or suicide—he does not know he is still here on earth, among the living. If he/she has any unfinished business, his/her spirit can be seen by sensitive individuals.

The dead will still be affected by the affairs and thoughts about them by living relatives, close friends and other persons significant to them when they were alive.

That's why it is wrong to mourn too much the passing of a person. It keeps the dead from ascending to higher realms in the spirit world. Prayers help the spirits of the dead but talking or them all the time is bad for them. They will be pulled back to earth.

How do you feel about television shows or movies that depict the mystical and paranormal?

They are mostly unrealistic and exaggerated. Some are downright bad. This is especially true of local shows. Their only objective seems to be merely to scare people, not to educate or inform them of the facts about these mysterious happenings. I don't pay too much attention to them.

At least some foreign productions are well researched and more realistic. A few outstanding examples are "Ghosts," starring Jessi Blunt and Patrick Swayze, and "Sixth Sense," starring Bruce Willis and Haley Joel Osment.

What would you say to skeptical and nonbelievers of the paranormal?

Nothing. I have no interest in converting them to my way of thinking. Maybe one thing I would want to tell them is, "Do your homework. Conduct some in-depth research and serious reading on the subject before you start mocking and condemning any occurrences or believe dismissing these things as nonsense."

I hold that some skepticism before I started investigating thoroughly these phenomena. I thought they were nonsense and a product of people's fertile imagination and wishful thinking or even scientific data and extensive research supporting belief in them.

So, unless they have proof or experience of the paranormal, skeptics are correct in not believing

Unless they have proof or experience of the paranormal, skeptics are correct in not believing

Getting beyond weight-loss plateaus

HERE IS A COMMON WEIGHT-LOSS experience: Weight drops easily in the beginning then it becomes harder and harder to lose until finally it levels out. It seems like nothing will shake the body from this plateau, which can last for weeks, months, or even years.

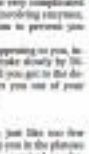
This is when people most often despair, "I'm still trying to lose the last 10 pounds." Extremists suspect that it could be tied to a survival mechanism.

The body seems to guarantee toward a certain weight or size, and it will do everything in its power to stay there. You would think all you would have to do is to eat even less and exercise even more, but weight loss is not always that simple.

If you find yourself stuck in a weight-loss plateau, you can try several strategies. But first, you have to ask yourself if you are striving for a weight that is realistic for you.

Many people want to be thinner than is practically possible. If you have to diet and exercise excessively to maintain a certain weight or size, it is not realistic or healthy for you.

Now, assuming you really need to lose those last five or 10 lb, one of the following may be the reason you can't get out of your weight-loss rut.



WELL AND GOOD
Tina Jean

Calories

When you first attempt to lose weight, you are usually very careful with how much and what kind of food to eat. As the pounds fall away, you may then become a little overconfident and, without realizing it, you start eating what you should or shouldn't and eating the wrong thing.

It could be before dinner, half a cheese bite bit, a few extra tablespoons of rice... many of these little things add up over a period.

You may be having larger than normal portions or several servings of healthy food. Keep a food diary and refer to down every single nibble or snack that comes over your mouth. Do this for a week or two. You may be surprised at what you find out.

The diary may also reveal the exact opposite...too little food. In this case, the body thinks there is a famine going on and, through some very complicated chemical messages involving enzymes, slows your metabolism to prevent you from "dying."

If this is what is happening to you, increasing your food intake slowly by 50-100 calories a day (till you get to the desired weight level) may get you out of your weight-loss plateau.

Exercise

Excessive exercise just like too few calories, will also keep you in the plateau for two reasons...the survival mechanism concept and the "exercise burns out more" theory.

Current research indicates that women are accustomed to eat more when they do too much or too vigorous exercise.

On the other hand, you may no longer be as consistent in your exercise routine as you were in the beginning of your weight-loss campaign.

Keeping a record of how often you actually exercise may disclose whether your memory of your exercise frequency is realistic or not.

Routine

Doing the same exercise routine over and over again kills the body into a "comfort zone" where it no longer burns the same amount of calories it did when you started. Researchers found that you might burn 12 percent less calories by doing the same old thing day in and day out.

Jolt your body out of its doldrums by changing the intensity, frequency, duration or type of exercise. An example: If you are used to walking three times a week, change one of the sessions to cycling. Or you could alternate walking days with weight-training days.

You would also increase the intensity of your walking routine by doing intervals of jogging and walking. You could add another 15 minutes to your existing walking time. You could also walk an extra day a week.

Whatever you decide to do, make additional changes every six weeks so the body doesn't get used to them. You may find that changing your exercise routine is just the "shot in the arm" you need both physically and psychologically. To prevent injuries, remember to make these changes gradually.

Crash diet

People try all kinds of crazy crash diets hoping to lose those last 10 lb. They usually succeed—temporarily. Then, the pounds are back in a flash. This cycle sometimes continues for years. It's called "yo-yo dieting."

It isn't as bad for your metabolism as you once believed but it will get you nowhere in getting rid of those last stubborn pounds for good. Why? Because you can't keep it up.

Crash diets are unrealistic and unhealthy. They don't teach you anything about making real food choices in a real world where you have to eat with your family and friends and are surrounded by temptations.

Patience and commitment

For as long as you are not fighting nature by trying to be thinner than you really should be, patience and a serious commitment to healthy eating and exercise habits will eventually help you break through your weight-loss plateau. Keep in mind, though, that to preserve that victory you will have to be committed for the rest of your life.

Visit www.tinajeanhill.tsm.ph/fv

Bitter medicine

AMBROSIA CHAMAITH LIM, better known as ampalaya, is a vegetable, fruit and herb.

Indigenous to Asia, it has 98 different names (bitter melon, bitter gourd). But though its name varies, its amazing healing benefits are recognized.

Momordica is Latin for bitter. Ampalaya's bitter taste is caused by momordicin. It is believed to have originated in Africa.

The plant is one of many used centuries ago as medicine. Interestingly, it is considered a natural drug. The Chinese use it for human immunovirus infection and tumors. It is also used as aphrodisiac, laxative and emetic (a substance that causes vomiting).

Ampalaya has many nutrients: vitamin A, 335 mg; vitamin B1, 0.04 mg; B2, 0.03 mg; B3, 0.3 mg; C, 91 mg; calcium, 3.2 percent by weight; iron, 0.9 mg; phosphorus, 3.2 percent by weight.

The humble, unattractive fruit contains amino acids, alkaloids, polypeptides (a, insulin), cytokines and cellulose.

William G. Sorita, Ph.D., University of the Philippines, says, "While most studies in vitro (in lab glassware) and in vivo (in human and animals) revealed no pregnant or otherwise compromised or compromised derived from the leaves and fruits of M. Charantia L. But not responsible for lipopolysaccharide activity, various studies support [it] are so an subject [therapy for diabetes]."

A cup (processed) given by Los Abelardo, president of Chamaithai is to use it right after taking your dinner or it can slow down the increase in glucose caused by eating starches.

People with a history of diabetes in the family and are extra careful about taking simple sugars and refined carbohydrates, as opposed to complex carbohydrates, should take ampalaya as a usual feeling guilty about giving in to sweet cravings.

In her book "Diabetes Cure," Enola Y. Yeh, MD, MPH, Harvard Medical School, reviewed results of 100 studies involving 500 people with Type 2 diabetes and impaired glucose tolerance. She found that the seven most promising substances for diabetes were aloe vera, American ginseng, ampalaya, chromium, cocoa malic (or guard) gymnema sylvaire, nopal (Mexican/cactus American) cactus and cinnabar.

INSIDE OUT

Cory Quirino

(Behavior: "Ampalaya: Nature's Remedy for Type 1 and Type 2 Diabetes," by Frank Murray)

The World Health Organization predicted a worldwide epidemic of diabetes among people aged 20 and older, to rise 1999-2025. In the Philippines, it is among the top five diseases.

If you suspect you may have diabetes, see your physician immediately. If you do not have it, make this humble fruit a part of your daily life.

Juice up

1 ampalaya, medium-sized
1 c chaka juice (coco water
1 carrot (1 sugar/beet root)
Drink up for better health.

Bliss heaven

If isn't vanity to want to be healthier. If you become more attractive as a result of this, why not? There is a stress-relief tucked somewhere in Kerjaman Road, White Plains, QC. It is there that just a spa, Called Amnesia, it offers a fusion of ancient and modern medicine and Sun Bear relaxation therapies.

It guarantees a healthier body and peace of mind. Offering an intriguing fusion of health packages like pain management, weight loss, women's health and diabetes, detoxification and so on, the oasis lets the affair-weary residents relax and recharge.

But what is interesting is its medical spa services. Bio-blood analysis, iris analysis and body cream assessment. With a combination of herbs, laser treatments and supplements, pain can be eased and managed.

Those who need to detoxify, there are the cleansing diet program, colonic hydrotherapy and massages, all supervised by medical doctors and doctor Edwin Shen, and general manager Boris Cadenhead Jose 9111515.

Bliss

Treat yourself to a whole day of therapy. Have a healthy vegetarian breakfast then have yourself weighed. Undergo various painless tests to determine your state of health. Consult a nutritionist, join yoga or belly dancing class, undergo colonics, meditate, have a relaxing massage.

Indulge in organic food all day for a change. That's what you need to do soon. You owe it to yourself.

Youthful hands and feet

You know what they say, you can tell a person's age by her hands and feet. So, seek meticulously supervised schoolteacher Maria who took a more youthful look her is dermatologists. In the case of spaghetti hand pains (sadly dangerous) varicose veins, see need a vascular surgeon to deal with the problem.

The Lorenzo Wet Center, the first in the Philippines (from the Australia-based Lorenzo International), located at Legaspi Village and H. Lolo's Medical Arts Building, offers a technique of sclerotherapy designed by Chinese-Malaysian doctor Hooke Sien.

In the local clinic, spider veins, varicose veins and even facial veins (which probably no other clinic will treat) are handled by doctors Serge Ismirnoff and Bernardo Bautagan. Now your vein problems can be fixed minus surgery. Call 8910731, 8942361, 7224303.

The before- and after treatment results are amazing using the finest medicine and a gentle but effective advertising solution. Good news is there is no downtime in your daily routines or activities.

Tip

Whenever possible, keep your legs in a raised, upright position as often as you can. At the office or home, find a quiet corner to relax for 20 minutes, twice daily.

Life can be made better by knowing your options. Beginning today make it a habit by one!

Love and light!

Free cataract screening for seniors

BOROUGH MEDICAL CLINIC (BMC) marks Sight Saving Month by offering free cataract screening for all seniors citizens 60 years old and above 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Monday-Saturday, the whole month of August.

BMC has branches at S/O, Cybermall Building, Eastwood City, and 2/F, SM Mall of Asia.

Now on its third year, the program aims to help prevent reversible blindness resulting from cataract among the elderly.

Cataract is the most common cause of reversible blindness worldwide. It is removed by surgery and an artificial lens is attached to the eye.

Cataract is a condition where the lens of the human eye becomes opaque resulting in the blindness of vision.

Advances in technology have made cataract surgery safer and faster, making it easier to allow visual rehabilitation even among the elderly.

BMC recently bought the Alcon Infinity Pharmacodelivery Machine, the machine of choice for cataract surgery in the best eye centers worldwide.

Call 6671345, 6671369 or 6671378 (Eastwood), 5360507 60 (3M Mall of Asia); and 8167633 (Pantaleon Excel, Inc Clinic).

IT'S THE HORMONES

Acne develops when oil in the skin is excessively produced. When skin is oily, bacteria, clogged pores, inflation and inflammation occur. Medical findings have proved that the male hormone, androgen, promotes the excessive oil production in the skin. Oily skin in the face and upper part of the body are oily hair are any other symptoms of excessive androgen. Many topical treatments work by opening the pores, killing the bacteria, and reducing inflammation. For many, this approach may be treating only the symptoms rather than the actual cause of acne.

Acne affects women from all ages, from teens to later years. It typically appears during puberty, but recent studies show that even among adult women, many still suffer from acne mainly due to hormonal activity. Although topical treatments are sometimes successful, women have other cost-effective options to treat acne. One of these options is hormonal therapy, among which is the contraceptive pill which has a proven efficacy in treating mild to moderate acne. This combined contraceptive pill has a mild antiandrogenic activity. It is used to remember that although (people) androgens cause acne, this hormone remains to have major physiological significance in women and thus has to be present always, albeit in small amounts. Due to the mild androgenic activity of the combination pill, women can be spared from the physical and psychological symptoms of androgen insufficiency (which can be induced by the anti-androgenic activity of other preparations). According to the Women's Health Program of the Monash University, androgen insufficiency can be manifested as fatigue, depression, low libido, muscle weakness and bone loss."

Hormonal therapy is important to consider when treating acne. It is best to consult your doctor about your options. For more information, email your queries at grace@organism.ph or send a text at 09 16 3917413.

Read https://acne.ph/health-news/monash-acne-act Pro 20 Grace RN

MEDICard. The Healthcare I Deserve!

Take Charge Doc!

Today, medically, what is a healthy diet? Is the food pyramid still a good guide?

Nicky

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VISA

"IMPOSSIBLE is nothing," said Facebook Chamber head coach Ryan Gregorio, shown above in white Adidas sportswear with assistant coach Bonito Magsanoc. His team did win the PBA Fiesta Conference, proving the Adidas ad campaign is no empty boast.

Shoe-casing the champions

ALTHOUGH BRANDED NON SPORTS, some could maximize athletes' performance by providing shoes that helped the Facebook Chamber Giants win the Fiesta Conference championship.

Continuing to push the boundaries of innovation, Adidas designs products that try to respond to the needs of athletes and their bodies. Its latest product line is engineered with Adiwear like C3.0adidas, a lightweight and breathable material.

Though Climalite is suitable for athletes in different sports, it is particularly suitable in basketball players like #3 Simon and Ray Evangelista and coach Ryan Gregorio and Bonito Magsanoc of the champion team.

Adidas performance wear with Climalite helped them attain their optimum performance.

Pristine, an Adidas partner offers the Climalite-made shoes and more. The champs had a rotating day recently at the store, even playing a little basketball.

Pristine shops are at Alabang Town Center, Blue Wave Mall, Greenhill 3, Metro East, Park Square, Robinsons Place Manila, Seaside Street Hype Mall, SM North Edsa, SM South Mall, SM Mega Mall and SM Mall of Asia.

PBA players Ray Evangelista and PJ Simon

PINGGANOC with player Ray Evangelista

US specialists to speak at regional autism confab

Hong Kong hosts the Asian regional meet on autism Aug. 12-13

DARRYL DENNIS SON ARMAN was diagnosed with autism shortly after the family moved back to Hong Kong from the United States.

Although it has been a gruelling experience seeking the proper treatment for Armen in here, says Yang, they have been successful with Armen and he has been recovering nicely after dogged intervention.

Yang's experience in dealing with Armen, Spectrum Disorder (ASD) has made him conclude that there are no quick fixes. "Recovery takes time. This is about a long-term commitment to self-education in order to be an effective manager for everyone because no one else will but so hard," he says. "You go down trying to the very end. It's never over."

Behavioral has been an epiphany to Yang. "I have finally experienced miracles in dental here," he says. "This is what drives my commitment to being responsible for my kids, which in turn drives my will to live. I refuse to live without them."

Yang exhorts parents to address all dimensions of ASD and to "observe the mix of treatments that best matches your kids profile and your child's unique characteristics."

"Many parents are focused primarily on dealing with the behavioral aspects of this developmental disorder," he notes. "What about the medical issues?"

Access to specialists

Together with other parents of autistic children in Autism Resource Network Foundation in PH, Yang is organizing the Asian Autism Conference 2006, to be held Aug. 12-13 at The Hong Kong Academy of Medicine, Aberdeen, HK.

Increasing awareness in the PI is crucial, he says. If not impossible, update for most parents in Asia. The conference is a unique opportunity to interact with specialists in ASD treatment and research from leading institutions, including Harvard Medical School.

Among the specialists is Timothy Buie, a pediatric gastroenterologist at Massachusetts General Hospital (Harvard Medical School) and instructor of pediatrics at Harvard University. He is known for his expertise in diagnosing children with gastrointestinal complications of autism and his dynamic approach to treating gut issues in children on the spectrum. Buie has endoscoped more than 400 children with ASD. He will discuss gastrointestinal problems, which are found in the majority of children with ASD.

Also from Harvard is pediatric neurologist Martha Herbert, who specializes in children with learning and developmental disorders. She will discuss the genetic body of research on biomedical problems like inflammation and oxidative stress in ASD, which suggests that the brain may not be the prime target but rather is caught in the crossfire of systemic abnormalities whose treatment can lead to improved brain function.

The two-day conference, which costs HK$1,000 per person, welcomes parents of autistic children, regional and local pediatricians, biochemists and neurologists, occupational therapists, nurses, clinical psychologists, speech-language pathologists and special needs/health care officials. Group discounts are available.

To register, log on to www.conference.asnetasia.org, call (852) 26490488, fax (852) 26490627 or e-mail asrclass@asphk.com.

Dealing with diarrhea induced by stress

EVERYONE KNOWS THAT THE digestive system can adjust to a wide variety of foods and put up with bouts of questionable nutritional value. Emotional duress and your digestive system, however, is an entirely different thing entirely.

According to the US National Digestive Diseases Information Clearinghouse: "It is common to have diarrhea when you're stressed. This happens because the hormones stimulate the colon, which speeds the passage of its contents."

Most people don't realize that while your body can tolerate an occasional amount of stress, over time, constant exposure to tense and demanding situations can take a toll on your body. This could result in distressing bouts of diarrhea.

It's important to take the time to learn what you can do to keep your digestive system in check. Diarrhea, or LBM as Filipinos commonly refer to it, caused by stress is usually overlooked because of the many obvious and common triggers like going spoiled or contaminated food. However, stress is an inevitable part of life and diarrhea caused by emotional shifts and pressure can hit you at any time during the day.

Identifying traumatic or demanding situations whenever you can is the ideal way to avoid stress-induced diarrhea, but it is not always possible. Perhaps a quick yoga class or some hard rest will help clear your head, but the stress that your digestive system has experienced will need something more than stretching and therapy. In most cases, it would be best to have anti-diarrheal medication handy to relieve the symptoms.

Imodium, a brand that is trusted by many doctors, is proven to be very effective in treating and relieving the symptoms of diarrhea. During stressful situations when your body tends to speed the passage of food through your digestive tract, Imodium reduces it to allow the rhythm back to normal giving your body more time to absorb water and nutrients.

With its original loperamide formulation, Imodium is actually 10 times more powerful and is the only anti-diarrheal medicine with recognized globally—available in more than 80 countries worldwide. Taking Imodium not only deals with the symptoms of stress-induced diarrhea, it also addresses the risk of complications that may arise because of LBM.

As a brand that has been around for 20 years, you can depend on Imodium as an effective option against diarrhea.

Loperamide (Imodium) is marketed and distributed by Janssen Pharmaceutica, which has an international reputation of pharmaceutical innovation and quality.

Powering the famous for the Famous Cup

DURING THE Famous Cup 2 International Badminton Tournament held at the Manila Polo Club, sponsor Powerade Sports Drink made sure all players were well-hydrated.

Powerade has electrolytes to maintain water balance and help in fluid absorption. Its carbohydrates content provides energy and prevents fatigue.

Available in Orange and Mountain Blast flavors, Powerade refreshes, replenishes and restores fluids and minerals lost through perspiration. It comes in a handy resealable PET bottle.

With the three teams participating in the tournament kicked off with an exhibition game between former national team players Rudolf Bartolome and Benedicto Ramos, with their respective partners, Richard Gomez and Judy Ann.

Completing the Orange Team were Vicente Lim, vice president of Gold Corp Inc., and former national player Primo Lim; PBL Philweeks Co. VP Raymond Rodrigo and Sarah Ramirez; Bryan Lim, general manager of Human and Bench; and Carol Bewlay, operations manager of Air Cairo. The Green Team was composed of Eugene Rangkuti and Dianne Santos and Boni Garcia; Model Tonyo and Veronica Mayor with Tony; Maryann Abaco and Lani Marquez; Luz Sigson-Reyna and stage actor Simbo Cervelo; William Chang, VP of La Perla Shops; and Mitchi Poblete and Dina Pimentel and Mont Almira.

The Union Team was composed of Regine Rangkuti and famous pubmed player Alice John Campos; Sandy Santos and Rodel Bartolome; wife-to-be Gil Grandilards and Alvin Sulleaseur; Friday's Boracay CEO Benny Mauris and Cris Arellano; Elma Samson and cousin Jessica Soho; Jessica Noble Macias, CEO of It's that's in Boracay and volunteer and former model Geri Padilla; Dianne Chong and new boyfriend Jun Almeda; Richard's Lester Cuyao and PR guru Irene Pascual; and Rosario Cuenca and Gina Campos.

Making up the Blue Team were Judy Lim and Wells Fernandez; Joseph Tan and former national team player Ian Pamaranan; Marvin Lim and Babe Santos; David Lim and Li Mann; Carol Francisco, proprietor of Pebble Beach and Devon Garcia; and Benny Guevarra; Bunny Aguilar, owner of Bubbly Fabrics, and Carmela Gana; Jessica Sison and Sarah Cheng; Wing Chang and Manila Peninsula's asst. promotions consultant Debbie Tabio and Rhonda Ocampo.

Powerade is a product of The Coca-Cola Company.

VINCENT Lim and Bryan Lim

RICHARD Gomez

CIARA Fresnillo, Luz Sigson Reyna, Carmela Gana, Diana Guerrero, Reena Aguilar, Judy Lim and Rina Samson

RAYOTAS Mayor Toby Tiangco and William Chang

GENTLEMAN of the hour, CPPI holdout president Luis L. Ablaza Jr., gives the welcome remarks

OTHER officers and directors Jose-Peter Lhuillier, Isabel Khalil, Celso Hernandez, lawyer CPPI director Rey Hernandez, lawyer Pablo Magno and Victoria Villanueva

CPPI OFFICERS and directors Lito Pineda, Enriqueta Asensio, assistant treasurer Tessi Alvia, PRSC Secretario B. Bendaña, director Celso de la Merced Hernandez, auditor Lawyer Pablo P. Magno, legal counsel/assistant corporate secretary Nicholas Aguilar, director, corporate secretary, and director Rodrigo C. Rivera Jr. and Charles Andrei L. Lhuillier

In golden pawnbrokers' affair

LAWYER Araceli B. Magno

POPULAR Ambassador Johannes "Jan" de Kok of the European Commission and wife Agnes de Kok

PAWNEE Schemes with the manager, Consul of Greek ferrets, attorney Philip Ablaza, Johanna Maureen Lule Estimatida, and Ambassador Jaqa Montero of Chile

JOAE and Chino Portugal, with Lee and Robert Cullen

VICKY Tanhueng, Baron Geisler, Tara Tanhueng and Teresita Tanhueng Libert

COVER of Philippine Tatler's August issue, pole player Inigo Zobel (left), Rufo's "Sam Sam Quarry" Judges and Isetah Pena, Rina Jison-Gaker, Marian Earing, Virginia Cruz-Ongsiria, Ruth Tiaoi-Jacamilla, Katrina Sevilla-Quema, Emily Asturia Lopez and Tita Lopez. Photographed at Nelly's Garden (below)

GORGEOUS actress Regine Tolentino announces the winner in the Black & Decker Celebrity Challenge—Albert Martinez is the year's Bag of the Doll.

I GET ALL SORTS OF INVITES BUT WHEN you send the invitation that said "We would like to request the pleasure of your company for the Pawnbrokers of the Philippines Golden Anniversary" without batting an eyelash, I accepted.

So I dashed to the chi-chi Polo Club and was welcomed by an Inn Out-like maître'dotte, effusive and handwashing Chairman of Brothers, heir of the Philippine Inc., PCPPI president Luis L. Ablaza Jr. of the renowned Ablaza Pawnshop, who is on his eighth term now, and his supportive wife, circa glitz decorator-cum-thriller Ablaza of Guatemala.

They were also welcoming 200 invitee like members of the diplomatic set, officers and members of CPPI, their families and pals, pahanget.

When the ballet-arms were in the 2006-elected officers and directors were inducted by Venerable Yessies Santiago, associate justice of the Supreme Court.

Ambassador Johannes "Jan" de Kok of the European Commission who guest speaker. He was introduced by Jean Henri Lhuillier.

As always, Johnny Litton was in his best as emcee. Fr. Rolando Beraldo called the invocation prayer and Isabel Abella, who has a checkered past, led the singing of the Pawnbrokers Anthem and the chamber's hymn. She was joined by opera Amore Mangya and pianist Mary Ann Bacchus.

President Ablaza and lawyer Benny Villaruz conferred the CPPI's lustrous philanthropy recognition award to 15 members including Lito Ablaza of Ruby Pawnshop, a two-term director of CPPI.

During dinner, to radio-cal, and presentation of CPPI's past presidents, to various and amusing, was dessert, escorting bands of applause-challenge.

While the pageant was going on, we couldn't help admiring the awesome décor by the talented Jun, Jun Ablaza who did a fab job decorating the grand ballroom.

Time for world-acclaim pahanget, minus the last hand of Manny Dantal got everyone on the dance floor till way late past all three hostess pawnbrokers: and brothers.

Grand launch

This Saturday, all roads will definitely lead to the popular design Terence Reed for the launch of his 10th month.

Philippine Tatler Magazine, the country's (very) own social, editorial and lifestyle magazine, will launch its August issue with a grand cocktail party at the hotel's ballroom, pahanget.

Partners prominent Bonggay are featured in a 7-page insider photo essay. "Southern Grandeur" is an inside look at the area of life of these old-wealth magic houses and businesses.

The photographic issue takes its readers into

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Mauricio Advincula

Photos by Alex Van Magno using Kodak Professional

Mga Kasama, with famous landmarks of the boutique city of Bonifacio Japanese!

The ballroom will be transformed into an oriental-glamorous setting through the magic of interior designer par excellence Mike Calang. To complement the décor, master culinary expert Maribel Padilla-Lipsingco will whip up scrumptious delicacies for everyone's delight.

Needless to say, aubergine, top secret but, shoot, political bigwigs and captains of industry are expected.

A wedding edition of photographer Al Bravo 13 years anniversary Rangoon will open in the Grand Center of Robinsons Place Roxas. On next day.

And who will be on the cover? The Philippine Tatler will announce soon, but we have lots from young tycoon and international polo player handsome Iñigo Zobel, photographed by his photographer also was Hagen Bipolar photographer Ayala Alabin took the photos for the inside pages.

This issue is made possible by Smart Infinity, GBH, 7 Eleven Beltrandi and Amigo Terrace Resort, made through the efforts of editor-in-chief Isabelle Lim de Ocon, Rolex's Amaya Fernandez and in demand PR Stacey Villarosa and Penny Bowe society columnist John B. Custodio.

Catch you later, pahanget!

Celebrity challenge

Black & Decker, the world's largest power tool manufacturer, crowned the new champion of its Challenge 2006.

Popular actor Albert Martinez beat rivals favorite Ricky Davao, television anchor Ellen Robinson and actress Regine Tolentino in the first Black & Decker Celebrity Challenge, pahanget.

The 20-year-old Ryan Tanagon won the main championship round held at the Armory Center of Mall Makati.

The super-entertainer Albert, who's married to wife with fated and his teenage daughters, said: "For almost been a huge Black & Decker fan. During hostile the United States for quite some time, I got used to the idea of doing repair jobs by myself since it's quite expensive to hire expensive them."

The prize for all contests brought home a Black & Decker Workmaster and Power Tool package, to boot.

The challenge involved making him screwjobs a mandala board as quickly as possible using Black & Decker's powerful drill/driver.

The awesome event, hosted by handsome Paolo Abrera and pretty-as-a-picture Regine Tolentino, drew thousands of spectators hoping to get a glimpse of their favorite stars.

Having a great time were Mayi Gutierrez, Lander Vera Perez, DMA '7's Dax Santiago, Black & Decker's Arlyn Ocon and Chris de los Reyes, Ayo's Mark Chua and Abraham Ursal, and his bobchet president Johnny Echanique.

Over the years, the response to the annual Black & Decker Challenge has been overwhelming, with hundreds of people participating (one set started the competition four years ago), said Anthony Albano, commercial manager for Black & Decker Philippines.

Black & Decker products enjoy recognition in over 100 countries, its global distributions as an acclaimed in the power tool industry.

The Black & Decker Challenge 2006 was presented by Ace Hardware and Hardinery Pools, and in cooperation with 3M Multi, pahanget.

HANDSOME Iwan Paolo Abrera

BLACK & Decker marketing manager Arlyn Ocon

CHALLENGERS Actor Albert Martinez, Ricky Davao and Bill Velasco

HOT HOST actress-host Bonnie Bakers hosts the challenge.

MAKE Visitors tries her skills drilling.

COMM Katya Patrol's Angelo Abrenica

FOXTROT — BY BILL AMEND

A. LIPIN — BY JOEL ABRERA

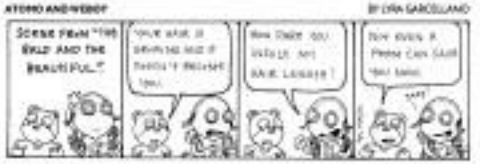
BARF BLUES — BY JERRY SCOTT

PUGAD BABOY — BY PHIL JAMORA

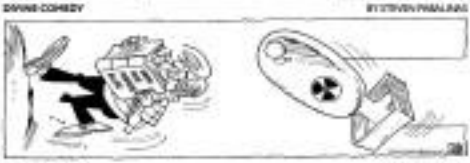
NUTS — BY PATRICK McDONNELL

LOKSHOTS — BY ELIZABETH CHOMICKI

ATOMO AND WEEBOY — BY LYRA GARCELLANO



DIVINE COMEDY — BY STEVEN PANALIGAN



BIRD MACHINE — BY MARK ABERA

HEADBANGERS — BY JORGE TIQUIO

TULOOK — BY PAPU AND TATUM HILAPIRLING

BEN — BY DANIEL SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Escape deal
4 Poking kisser
8 Mount Vesuvius setting
14 Kingdom "On the ___"
15 Soap additive
16 Break a commandment
17 Sweet vanilla
18 Stately
19 Cardinal rulers
20 Mineo Edwards single
21 Walk as recon
22 Eye shot
23 "I bet I can" start
24 Disagreement
26 "Green Eggs and ___"
27 Prince unceremoniously
31 Bobby or Sen. Patrick Henry
32 Mono genre
34 Ebb
35 Soviet Flight
36 Queer sight
41 Author of "Soft Rains" and "Mirrors and Windows"
42 Male police officer
43 Bone dry
44 Underground township
45 Mimi Sheraton specialty
46 Sound of Mozart
48 Forensic sampling
49 Groups to be
50 "Only Heaven's guidance can"
56 Swanson solicitor
58 Dartboard, on occasion
59 Baker artist
60 LXXXIII + III

DOWN
1 Accessory razor
2 Jawbone hinges
3 Four of ours
4 ___ Ice
5 Bible team
6 ___ Land (ghetto)
7 Swanson part
8 Dessert dip
9 Investigative org.
10 Pigs in their litter
11 Motorcycle gang
12 Liquor-drugs cocktail
13 Perform-no-defect
21 Single's advice user
22 Hit ship
24 Fuzzy drinks
25 Andrea soaker
27 Viking's captain
28 Female romance?
29 Fleeting weekend
30 Checkbook out
33 Has considered for items
36 Spanning dogs
37 Game sets
38 Sphere
39 Obtains leggings
40 Composer de ___
44 Promotion
46 Fur wrap-wife
47 Salesman
50 NYC subway
51 ___ go
52 Sneaky creep
53 Wrecks
54 Body part

57 Tattoo feature
58 "Act with a Survey" company

Sunday's Puzzle Solved

HOROSCOPE

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku — by Dave Green

	6			2			4	
2			5			3		
		7			1			5
	1			8			6	
9			6			7		
		3			5			9
	7			1			8	
1			2			6		
		6			9			3

Difficulty Level ★★

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.

Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

3	8	7	4	8	9	5	2	1
9	1	8	5	2	7	6	4	3
2	5	4	1	6	3	8	7	9
6	4	9	7	5	2	3	1	8
1	7	2	3	9	8	4	5	6
5	8	3	6	4	1	7	9	2
7	3	6	2	1	5	9	8	4
8	2	5	9	3	4	1	6	7
4	9	1	8	7	6	2	3	5

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Bonnie S. Velarde

MVP—Most Vulnerable Papa

A FOURFOLD DOSE OF TOLD me that Kris Aquino and Ateneo Yap had a cliff during the team's recent victory party. The story goes that while Ateneo was at the line Miguel offers the last of whose thumbs-

DOLLY WOOD
Dolly Ann Carvajal

giving. Hmm, it's way big thing him to attend the presidential meeting of her twin "Bimbit" at Megastall that same evening. She reportedly had the guilt trip on him by saying she had supported him all through the championship games, etc. should be at the presidential.

At a wife, Kris has every right to demand that. But what about Ateneo' obligation to the team and his fans? As MVP (Most Valuable Player), his presence was a must at the victory party. Ateneo allegedly gave in and left just when the party was starting. Since Megastall is just across San Miguel, wouldn't he have gone back to the party after receiving cheers the real carpet? Any couple ought to know the art of compromise. Is it too much to ask or too much to give?

After the movie, James, whose birthday falls, where he hurriedly signed some autographs and left groans because he didn't want to keep Kris waiting in the car. Time and again, I've heard him say on TV that she's no longer a "bentasita." Is that just a spiel? When it comes to calling the shots, is it a deal or no deal for the Yapo? If it's James who says "yap" to Kris all the time, he is rightfully an MVP—Most Vulnerable Papa.

Suicide

MY best guys out to this TV personality: Has land an "MU" with a young actor but he told her to keep everything hushhush. Just when she had fallen head over heels, he suddenly disappeared from her life. She lamented, "He led me on! Now I know why none of his relationships flourished. Pare pressure ng lone ling. Now, when we bump into each other, he ignores me or makes paring. I'm beginning to wonder if the rumor that he's gay is true!"

Beware of guys like this. Falling for them is like committing "relationship suicide."

Clue: The couple used to appear in one show but not at the same time.

FYI (For Your Indulgence)

• Ogie Alcasid told me that

Gretchen is back

... with not just one but two movies and a mouthful on sister Claudine Barretto

By Rayzel Ilao Dingcle

I HOUSE BEFORE SHE flew to the United States, controversial star Gretchen Barretto granted Inquirer Entertainment an interview, confirming that she is staging a comeback in not just one, but two movies.

She said she had just accepted two projects under Lily Monteverde's Regal and Orly Ilacad's Canary Films.

The Canary project is to be directed by Joel Javier Reyes and is part of the horror trilogy with the working title "Karma," an entry to this year's Metro Manila Film Festival.

"The rest of the cast hasn't been finalized. The only definite thing is that I'll play the lead, the mother, in the episode about an unique bird," she said.

The Regal movie is a "Desperate Housewives"-inspired drama-comedy with Dawn Zulueta, Dina Bonnevie and Raffy Gutierrez, directed by Eric Quizon.

"It's working title is "Desperadas," Gretchen said. "We play half-sisters. We have the same taste, but different fathers."

The room is...

Being cool to the room is further rent for mother, Annabelle Rama.

"We are trying to convince her po. The problem is, Rica Rosanbella's (another step) bigger than ours," Gretchen said, laughing.

The actor, pressed by fear igbalos, considers instead the four sisters.

"We have different personalities, no conflict arise. We still share the ups and downs in the sisters' relationships. We quarrel, but in the end, we still protect each other. It's not heavy drama ha? It's light and fun."

Since the four head stars are Gretchen, should viewers brace themselves for a comical showdown?

"We are making sure that the movie will not just be a fashion show, that it will have a meaningful story about family and entirely love."

Speaking of which, her estranged real-life sister Claudine Barretto told Inquirer in an earlier interview that she "misses Gretchen."

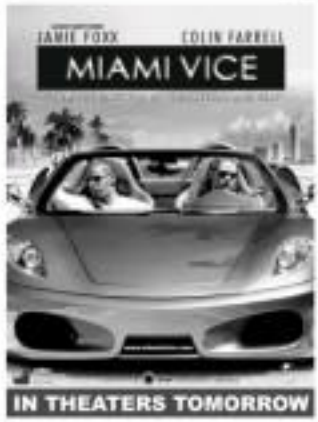
"I'm not totally vampirized that she misses me," Gretchen said. "I'm a very passionate person. When I love, I give my all. That's why my loved (and trust is mine, me when I don't see them ... It may cost, it's not a crime to miss someone. Everyone's entitled to feel that."

She herself misses the sisters.

"I've been away for the past 12 years. I'm excited and overwhelmed. I told Papa that I feel like I'm 14 years old again, doing my first movie."

But is she ready for the instigator against Whom? she ends with a show of controversies after dropping out of

GRETCHEN ON



MVP—Most Vulnerable Papa

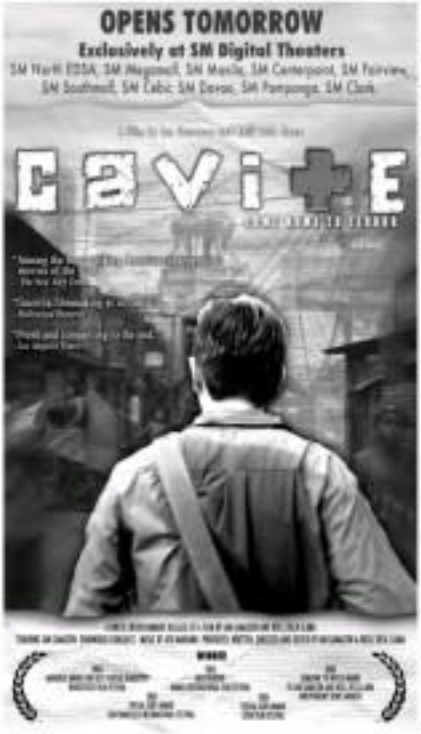
his latest duet with Regine Velasquez ("Hindi Ko Na Kayang Hindutan Pa") is about a gay relationship. "So many of my gay friends complain that their relationship with their papa is non-existent. They feel drained, yet they keep giving. I feel their pain, so I thought of working a song about that. Pa-isa-isa ba't-isa, how all gay relationships end up. Sometimes drama also happens between a man and a woman." The video of the song shows Ogie and Regine both in tears. Dahilan kasi, "Will you cry if you lose Regine?" Without hesitation he admitted, "Yes... if I lose her as a singing partner!" Amid all the crazy rumors about them, they just dust together.

■ Marvin Agustin used to be a bartender at Tin Marin's; now he's a bar owner and nonentrepreneur. That's what hard work and real talent can do. I enjoyed giggling out at his Cold Stitches (Gateway 20). Chichiet Pinoy homecooking! There I had a blast of a nightstop at Sin Cityster they (Cubao). He also has a Japanese resto in Shangri-La mall. Some stars just have the ingredients but haven't found the right recipe for success. Marvin has!

■ Packy Cortes says his relationship of a bolted OR would because they have no rules. "When there are too many do's and don'ts, you're bound to screw up." I second the motion. Sometimes the best way to handle a BF/GF is not to handle him/her at all.

■ Arnell Ignacio always cracks me up. In between clubbing sat pieces of gay advice to JCSat solid one, "I got married and had a kid. I tricked being straight but it got my life wrecked!"

■ Regal Entertainment and acclaimed young director Quark Henares are thrilled about "Super Inggo" — a movie about a group of new Pinoy superheroes portrayed by Mark Bautista, Josephine Sherwin, Polo Ravales, John Prats, Aaron Astrup and Nikas Ramos. Heather Lily brought in Hollywood people for the special effects and prosthetics. The movie shows Manila 75 years from now, with flying



INE VELASQUEZ and Ogie

ress and All For...and

ress's Room"

ER's Room," the show that
de the head of your typical
sending transgressive jeans
ion for late night TV is an
orth season. It provides co-
cial information and satire
ment for the upwardly mo-
e urban male. Will Ho-
gins (Mandie's hottest male
ld lotion) and Jocelyn
Sabo Hinojosa-
, Slovenian Tropic Interna-
ard are the new hosts
ch. It Wednesdays, 11:30
on Studio 23.

Pink-mag

A spectacular man-ish dress by
ourtesy Pink 105) originally
country's most popular con-
who converged for a major
ion shows that's sure to be a
chmark in the industry's future.
Jenn Garcia, Gladys Reyes,
ine Dizon, Pinky Amador,
ole Gil and Celia Rodriguez,
pictorial by my kumare
ith Nicolas (a truly a sight to
ook).

OF editor in chief Rough
ilot conceptualized the
and to empower the team
the GIRT sector. "We decided
Being together these well
and "villain" because these
pes also provide inspira-
to be the 'pink community'
ocially those who are not
to confidence about them.
ess," Rough shares. Truth is
ng sure!

For feedback, e-mail watering
rufang@inquirer.com.

AUDINE BARRETTO

Gretchen
s back

Rough Revillaville.ph for fur
remedy "Kung Fanshui
Fun?"!

That's the least of my wor-
," Gretchen said. "I like mud
ths antiques. It's part of

s prepare for her back-to-
h naturalmade, she left for the
last week for a three-week
ations with daughter Ilse
ngapore and partner Tony Boy
ndegren.

digest from spending quality
with Tony and my daugh-
. "It's like to focus on dieting
exercising while there. I'll
e thing for new outfits for the
ur movies. I want to look and
very best."

she admitted that because of
"recession," she caught
ts recently.

You know now," she said. "I
't want to pressure myself. I
want to enjoy making the
movies. If only I could ac-
all the others, but I don't
to push it. Tony Boy might
upset."

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2 JUST MY LUCK
3 THE BREAK-UP
4 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
5 SUKOB
6 CLICK Sneak Preview
7 WILD ORCHID 2
8 RV RUNAWAY VACATION
9 NACHO LIBRE
10 SUPERMAN RETURNS

ERMITA

1 SUKOB
2 NACHO LIBRE
3 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
4 CLICK Sneak Preview
6 LADY IN THE WATER
7 JUST MY LUCK

METRO EAST

1 LADY IN THE WATER
2 SUKOB
3 NACHO LIBRE
4 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
5 THE BREAK-UP
6 JUST MY LUCK
7 SUPERMAN RETURNS
8 CLICK Sneak Preview

NOVALICHES

1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
2 SUKOB
3 JUST MY LUCK
4 LADY IN THE WATER
5 CLICK Sneak Preview

CITISQUARE MALABON

1 SUKOB
2 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 2
3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE

PIONEER

1 JUST MY LUCK
2 CLICK Sneak Preview
3 SUKOB
4 THE BREAK-UP

"MIAMI VICE" Trivia PROMO

Answer the "Miami Vice" trivia questions in our daily moviegoer. Get your daily entries at any Robinsons Movieworld branch on or before August 10. Winners will get any of the following:

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1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
2 CLICK Sneak Preview
3 THE INSIDE MAN
4 SUKOB

LIPA

1 THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS 3
2 SUKOB
3 WHITE LADY
4 SEE NO EVIL

DASMARIÑAS

1 LADY IN THE WATER
2 WILD ORCHID 2
3 SUKOB
4 THE RUN
5 CLICK Sneak Preview

ANGELES

1 AN AMERICAN HAUNTING
2 CLICK Sneak Preview
3 WHITE LADY
4 SUKOB

IMUS

1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
2 WILD ORCHID 2
3 SUKOB
4 JUST MY LUCK
5 CLICK Sneak Preview

STARMILLS

1 WILD ORCHID 2
2 SUKOB
3 WHITE LADY
4 LOVE WRECKED
5 CLICK Sneak Preview
6 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2

BACOLOD

1 LADY IN THE WATER
2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
3 SUKOB
4 LOVE WRECKED
5 I WANNA BE HAPPY
6 NACHO LIBRE

ILOILO

1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
2 SUKOB
3 I WANNA BE HAPPY
4 NACHO LIBRE

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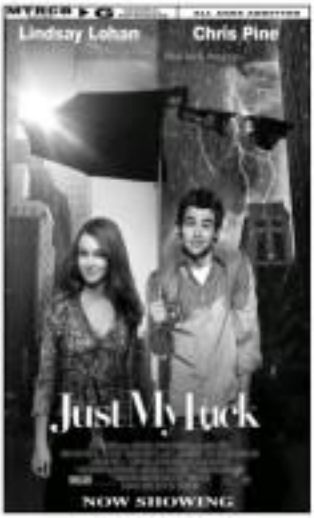
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